SALLEKHANĀ IS NOT SUICIDE

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FOREWORD

The L. D. Institute of Indology has great pleasure in publishing the Lectures on 'Sallekhanā is not Suicide', delivered by Justice T. K. Tukol in L. D. Lecture Series in September-October 1975.

The subject is discussed under eight sections. The first section acquaints us with the philosophical background of Sallekhanā and the second one lucidly explains what Sallekhanā means. The learned author says, "Sallekhanā is facing death (by an ascetic or a house-holder) voluntarily when he is nearing his end and when normal life according to religion is not possible due to old age, incurable disease, severe famine etc. after subjugation of all passions and abandonment of all worldly attachments, by observance of austerities gradually abstaining from food and water, and by simultaneous meditation on the real nature of the self untill the soul parts from the body."

The third section presents inscriptional evidences of the actual practice of the vow of Sallekhanā by Jaina monks, nuns and house-holders. The author has explored the Digambara sources. One will find more evidences if one explores the Śvetāmbara sources. There is one Śvetāmbara idol inscription on Mt. Shatrunjaya, which records that Shri Saṅgamasiddha Muni took the vow of Sallekhanā and ascended heaven in V.S. 1064[1]. I could not resist the temptation of mentioning one more evidence. 'Prabuddha Jeevan' Bombay, 1st May 1976 contains a note on Samādhi-maraṇa. Therein Shri Chimanlal Chakubhai Shah, a leading solicitor of Bombay, describes the Samādhi-maraṇa of his mother. She was suffering from jaundice. Medicines did not show good results. Doctors apprehended cancer of lever. She understood everything. She left medicines. She avoided solid food. After that she did not take even liquid food. She did not like to take in glucose through veins. Doctors advised her to get admitted to the hospital. But she requested her relatives to allow her to shun her body peacefully. She had no attachment to her body. She had no desire to prolong her life. Gradually her body waned but her mind was firm and peaceful. She took the vow of Sallekhanā (=Santhāro) from Shri Kantirushiji, a Jaina monk. She heard religious songs and cattāri maṅgala. On hearing the fourth maṅgala she passed away peacefully. It was 17th April 1976.

1. For the complete text of the inscription one may refer to the other side of the photo of the idol, placed in the beginning of this book.

The fourth section devoted to the account of voluntary deaths under other religions describes various types of voluntary deaths including the practices of satī and mahāprasthāna. Islam has neither advocated nor sanctioned voluntary deaths. Christianity too forbids voluntary deaths. The commandment is : Thou shalt not kill, neither thyself nor another.

The fifth section defines suicide, enumerates the causes that lead one to suicide, describes suicide in primitive societies and enumerates the main psychological and physical features of one who commits suicide. The sixth section briefly surveys the law on suicide as it exists in most of the countries in the world and draws the conclusion that not all countries in the world regard suicide as an offence punishable under the local law.

The seventh section examines the situations giving rise to suicide and Sallekhanā, intentions and psychology of the persons committing suicide and practising Sallekhanā and effects on their kith and kin. It brings out clearly the distinction between Sallekhanā and suicide, and finally concludes that Sallekhanā is not Suicide. The eighth section substantiates the conclusion arrived at in the previous section by the illustration of Sallekhanā by Āc. Śāntisāgara who quitted his body on 18th September, 1955 at the holy place of Kunthalgiri, Osmanabad District.

We are thankful to Justice T. K. Tukol for these lectures which he prepared at our instance. I have no doubt that the students, teachers and others interested in this subject will find this book interesting and illuminating.

L. D. Institute of Indology
Ahmedabad-380 009
15th August, 1976

Nagin J. Shah
Director

PREFACE

My studies of Jurisprudence, the Indian Penal Code and of criminal cases decided by me had convinced that the vow of Sallekhanā as propounded in the Jaina scriptures is not suicide. As this view is contrary to the one held by many foreign and Indian Scholars, I wrote an essay on the subject and showed it to my esteemed friend Late Dr. A. N. Upadhye who was a scholar of international repute in the study of Jainology and Prakrit. He suggested that I could look into inscriptions published in the volumes of Carnatica Epigraphica regarding the observance of the vow by numerous saints, nuns, Śrāvakas and Śrāvikās and to similar practices prescribed by other religions. I worked on his most invaluable suggestions. These lectures are the results of my maiden labours on a religious principle whose scope and nature are widely misunderstood. I do hope that they will dispell all doubts and establish that there are fundamental differences between suicide and Sallekhanā.

I am grateful to Late Dr. A. N. Upadhye for all his assistance. My grateful thanks are also due to Shri D. D. Malvania, the ex-Director of the L. D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, but for whose initiative and devotion to the Institute, these lectures would not have received the prestigious publicity and publication under the auspicious of the said Institute.

Bangalore-11. T. K. Tukol

Corrections

(pp. 50–56) Please read in the text the foot-note figures 23, 24... upto 37 for 22, 23... upto 36, and in the foot-notes the figures 12, 13... upto 35 for 13, 14... upto 36.

(p. 53, line 7) Please read Deva[22] for Deva.

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Puṇḍarīkasvāmī

[Please turn over for the text of the inscription.]

श्रीमद्युगादिदेवस्य पुण्डरीकस्य च क्रमौ ।
ध्यात्वा शत्रुञ्जये शुद्ध्यत्सल्लेस्या(श्या)ध्यानसंयमैः ॥

श्रीसङ्गमसिद्धमुनिर्विद्याधरकुलनभस्तलमृगाङ्कः ।
दिवसैश्चतुर्भिरधिकैर्मासमुपोष्याचलितसत्त्वः ॥

वर्षसहस्रे षष्ट्या चतुरन्वितयाधिके दिवमगच्छत् ।
सोमदिन आग्रहायणमासे कृष्णद्वितीयायाम् ॥

अम्मैयकः शुभं तस्य श्रेष्ठिरोधैर्यकात्मकः ।
पुण्डरीकपदासङ्गि चैत्यमेतदचीकरत् ॥

SECTION I

JAINISM AND SALLEKHANĀ

The fundamental principle of Jaina Metaphysics is that the entire universe comprises six substances of which Jīva and Ajīva are of supreme importance. Jīva or the soul has consciousness as its essential characteristic. It is either liberated (*mukta*) or in bondage (*saṁsārin*). A soul in its pure form is possessed of infinite perception or faith, infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss. The soul, as it is seen or felt in the world, inhabits some kind of body which may be immobile (*sthāvara*) or mobile (*trasa*). The Ajīva comprises Pudgala, matter; Dharma, the peinciple of motion or which makes motion possible; Adharma, the principle of rest or the passive cause of static condition; Ākāśa or space which accommodates all other substances in the universe; and Kāla or time which marks continuity and is also the cause of modification of the soul and other substances.

The Pudgala or matter is characterised by sense-qualities, namely, touch, taste, smell and colour. The soul in Saṁsāra is already in contact with Karmic matter from beginningless time. Karma is the direct result of the mental, verbal and physical activities of the soul. This Karma, a form of matter or a sort of energy, is subtle and highly refined. It acts as a veil to the real powers of the soul, and is of two varieties according to its effect on the soul. In so far as Karmas cause the destruction of the powers of the soul, they are Ghātiya, having four varieties : Darśanāvaraṇīya, Jñānāvaraṇīya, Antarāya and Mohanīya respectively, obscuring faith, knowledge, power and bliss. They obstruct the spiritual pro-

gress of the soul and act as brakes in achieving success in different fields of human activities. They are the cause of ignorance, indecisiveness, infatuation and imbalance in thought, speech and action. The other type of Karma is the Aghātiya with its four varieties, namely, Āyuṣ, Nāma, Gotra and Vedanīya which respectively determine and regulate the duration of life and matters allied to it; nature of personality such as body, height, size and colour; family, race etc.; and pleasures and pain in our life on earth.

Jainism believes in rebirth and so the consequences of our Karmas are dependent upon our own good and bad thoughts, words and deeds. Every living being is responsible for its own activities the consequences of which work out automatically. One cannot escape from one's Karmas except by experiencing their consequences, good or bad. The Karmas bear fruit and are therefore responsible for our Karmic bodies. Depending on the nature of the individual's Karma, the next life may be human or otherwise.

The goal of human endeavour is directed towards liberation from the various kinds of Karmas. The principles which indicate the process of liberation are seven, viz., Jīva, Ajīva, Āsrava, Bandha, Saṁvara, Nirjarā and Mokṣa. Reference has already been made to Jīva and Ajīva which are also called substances. When considered in combination with reference to Karma, they are included in the category of principles. Āsrava is the movement of Karmic matter towards the soul, while Bandha denotes the stage of actual bondage of the soul with the Karmic matter. Before commencing the process of liberation, it is necessary that there should be a stoppage of the inflowing of new Karmas and this is called Saṁvara or the stoppage of fresh ties. Then starts the process of shedding Karmic matter which is designated as the principle of Nirjarā. The final goal which is the process of complete liberation is termed as Mokṣa.

Jainism recognises fourteen stages in the evolution of the soul from impurity to purity or complete liberation. The

psychical condition of the soul due to gradual modifications and modulations leading to purgation of the matter is what is called Guṇasthāna. The first stage is that of the soul affected by Karmic matter which brings about Mithyātva or false faith when it is unable to see what is the right faith to follow in order to obtain salvation. It is common experience that there is the stage of mental wavering which causes ups and downs in the firmness of right conviction and that makes the soul hover in a state of uncertain condition of progress and regress. When once the soul gets firmly rooted in right faith, it begins shedding off its infatuating Karmas by the conquest, partial or complete, of the passions and desires for worldly acquisitions and possessions. When the soul's progress is to the fifth stage, there commences the preparedness to adopt rules of conduct. This process goes ahead if the enlightened soul continues in the progressive destruction of all conduct-infatuating Karmas leading to pure contemplation.

This spiritual process is inextricably connected with the process of shedding off the Karmas. The four passions of anger, pride, deception and greed working through mind, speech and body cause the invisible Karmic matter flow towards the soul (*āsrava*). The past Karmas along with the new ones bind (*bandha*) the soul, and this bondage may differ according to the nature (*prakṛti*) of the Karmic matter, its lasting character (*sthiti*), its strength (*anubhāga*) and the complexity of the Karmic atoms (*pradeśa*). However it is possible to stop fresh influx by freeing the mind from attachment, hatred, pride, infatuation and greed; by developing an attitude of mind which brings about restraint, self-discipline and non-attachment so as to create equanimity and balance in thought and conduct. In such state, there would be no Yoga (= cause of *āsrava*) or occasion for fresh Karmic inflow. This is possible by observance of rules of conduct, development of compassion towards all living creatures and meditation over the real nature of the world and of the final goal of life.

Such a soul would naturally make efforts to see that the Karmic matter attached to it gradually falls off or frees it from its fetters gradually by means of pious and ascetic practices like fasting, self-introspection and meditation on the real nature of the self backed by right faith in and knowledge of the inner reality of things.

The entire ethical code of Jainism is directed towards the attainment of complete liberation by cultivating the three jewels (*ratna-traya*), namely Right faith, Right knowledge and Right conduct, which constitute the path to it. Whether it is an ascetic or a house-holder, he has to follow the five vows: *ahiṁsā* or non-violence, *satya* or truthfulness, *asteya* or non-thieving, *brahmacarya* or celibacy and *aparigraha* or non-possessiveness. In the case of ascetics, they have to be observed with greater rigour. In addition to these vows, there are the three *Guṇavratas* and four *Śikṣavratas* for the house-holders. The *Guṇavratas* are: *digvrata*, *bhogopabhogaparimaṇa* and *anartha-daṇḍaviramaṇa*. The first requires self-imposition of restrictions on movements in different directions. The object is that complete freedom of movement is likely to lead to violence and transgression of other vows in the matter of drink, food, living etc. Random and unrestricted movement is sure to involve one into transgressions of the rules of conduct as one will be required to face unexpected situations and live in unexpected surroundings also. This vow is intended to ensure purity of conduct and living. The second vow consists in restricting oneself in the use of consumable and non-consumable goods of luxury. The principle behind it is to encourage development of self-restraint and self-denial in daily life. The last vow consists in restricting one's occupations and activities which are really harmful to the soul since they involve the breach of one or the other of the five vows. The five *anartha-daṇḍa-virati-s* are (1) *apadhyānavirati* which requires one to refrain from indulging in meditation on passionate thoughts and objects; (2) *pramādācarita-virati* that is avoiding wrong and objectionable conduct which

involves in the breach of pure conduct and thoughts, like seeing sex displays, gambling, shooting of birds etc.; (3) *hiṁsāpradānavirati*, refraining from any activity which might bring about or involve violence, i. e. supplying of weapons, poison etc.; (4) *pāpopadeśavirati* requires one to refrain from giving sinful advice or instruction in any of the human activities like trade, commerce, business etc.; (5) *duḥśrutivirati* which requires complete abstinence from reading bad books which are harmful to purity of thought and action. There are books which excite passions about sex, revenge etc. and bring about a perversity of mind.

The four *Śikṣāvratas* are : (1) *Samayika* consists in daily worship and contemplation. It is intended to cultivate equanimity of mind and balanced thinking. It also involves introspection, repentance and avoidance of harmful thoughts. (2) *deśāvakāśika* is supplementary to the vow of placing restrictions on one's own movements in directions by limiting one's movements to certain places and areas; (3) *proṣadhopavasa* is observance of regular fasts according to rules on 8th and 14th days of every fortnight. On such occasions, one should avoid indulgence in the use of perfumes etc. and refrain from daily occupations. (4) *atithisaṁvibhāga* cosists in according due respect to the guests and giving them food, shelter and scriptural books. This is one of the aspects of practising charity in daily life.

It is for a householder or for an ascetic, who has purified his body and mind with the observance of so many vows and tried to shed his Karmas, to observe the vow of Sallekhanā when he is faced with death under the circumstances that have been explained in the next Chapter. How should a wise man face death when it is nearing? In the Fifth Lecture of the Uttarādhyayanasūtra (vv. 2, 3, 16 to 19, 29 to 31 — '*Jaina Sūtras*, translated by Herman Jacobi, Sacred Books of the East', Vol. 45) it is stated that there are two ways of facing death : death with one's will and death against one's will. " Death against one's will is that

of ignorant men, and it happens (to the same individual) many times. Death with one's will is that of wisemen, and at best it happens but once."..."Then when death comes at last, the fool trembles in fear; and dies the 'death against his will' (having lost his chance) like a gambler vanquished by Kali."..."...hear from me the wise man's 'death with one's will'." "Full of peace and without injury to any one is, as I have heard (from my teachers) the death of the virtuous who control themselves and subdue their senses." "Such a death does not fall to the lot of every monk, nor of every householder;....the virtuous and the learned do not tremble in the hour of death." "A wise man having weighed (both kinds of death) and chosen the better one (taught in) the Law of Compassion, will become calm through patience, with an undisturbed mind (at the time of his death)..." "When the right time (to prepare for death) has arrived, a faithful (monk) should in the presence (of his teacher) suppress all emotions (of fear or joy) and wait for the dissolution of his body."

The principle underlying the vow is that a householder or a sage should, while 'quitting flesh and bones', have complete peace of mind after voluntary acceptance of the vow, consistently with the pious life of self-restraint and austerities. Calmness, patience and mind undisturbed by emotions of joy or fear will conduce to purgation of Karmas. It is mental peace that will lead to liberation from the Karmas in life; so at death, one should have equanimity of mind and die while engrossed in deep meditation. Jainism prescribes Sallekhanā as the final step for further liberation from the bondage of Karma even in the hour of death and in the manner of dying.

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SECTION II

WHAT IS SALLEKHANĀ?

Sallekhanā is facing death (by an ascetic or a householder) voluntarily when he is nearing his end and when normal life according to religion is not possible due to old-age, incurable disease, severe famine etc. after subjugation of all passions and abandonment of all worldly attachments, by observance of austerities gradually abstaining from food and water, and by simultaneous meditation on the real nature of the Self until the soul parts from the body. This may be accepted as a brief definition of the vow whose fuller implications and essential psychological constituents are explained in the paragraphs that follow.

The basic concept underlying the vow is that man who is the master of his own destiny should face death in such a way as to prevent influx of new Karmas even at the last moment of his life and at the same time liberate the soul from bondage of Karmas that may be clinging to it then.

According to Jainism, every individual soul, by its nature, is pure and perfect, with infinite perception, knowledge, power and bliss. But from eternity, it is associated with Karmic matter and has therefore become subject to birth and rebirth in numerous forms of existence. The supreme object of religion is to show the way for liberation of the soul from the bondage of Karma. The true path of liberation lies in the attainment of Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct in complete unison and harmony.

Every religion prescribes many vows and rules of conduct to assist its devotee in his arduous task of leading a pure life with a view to smoothening the path of self-realisation. The five vows of abstinence from violence, untruth, theft, un-

chastity and possessiveness, form the foundation of ethical life leading to spiritual development. Besides these, there are the *guṇa-vratas* and *śikṣā-vratas* which are intended to discipline the body and the mind, to create an awareness of the higher values of life and enhance the capacity, both physical and mental, to live a life of strict austerity.

The vow of Sallekhanā, as will be presently seen, is prescribed both for the house-holder as also for the ascetic. Both of them are required to practise *samāyika*, that is, introspection with concentration of mind and *proṣadhopavāsa*, that is, regulated fasting twice in a fortnight. While the former helps in the process of self-analysis and understanding, the latter helps purification of the body and mind, as the period of fasting is to be spent in the study of scriptures and meditation. *Proṣadhopavāsa* is fasting on the eighth and fourteenth days of the lunar months. "The fasting house-holder discards bodily adornments such as bath, perfume, garlands and ornaments, and spends his time in a sacred place like the abode of a saint or a temple or in his lonely fasting apartment, contemplating on pure thoughts by listening to or making others listen to the scriptures."[1] He has also to limit the use of consumable and non-consumable articles. Besides fasting on the eighth and the fourteenth day of the lunar month, he has to take only one meal at midday on the day preceding and succeeding the day of fast. He must abstain from his occupational activities and completely refrain from entertaining any thoughts of pleasure and passions. He has to exercise full self-control and spend the nights in prayers. It is common experience amongst Jainas that both men and women observe such fasts wholly or in modified forms according to their faith and capacity for self-restraint. There is no relaxation in the observance of the vow for a monk or a nun.

Jainism is a practical religion. It expects, therefore, the spiritual and ethical progress to be gradual and by stages.

1. *Reality*, p. 204.

Such progress of a house-holder is conceived of as taking place through eleven stages. These stages are called *pratimās*. Commencing with the inculcation of the right attitude in conduct and religion, a house-holder has to adopt and practise different vows one after the other until he acquires a state of high ethical conduct and spiritual attainment as will easily fit him into a life of renunciation. They help the individual to develop self-control and self-restraint so that the observance of fasting, meditation and other austerities become a part of normal life. The *pratimās* take one, step by step to the stage of ascetic life.

As already observed, the vow of Sallekhanā can be adopted by a house-holder as well as by a monk or a nun, when they foresee that their end is near. There is a compehensive exposition of this vow, both as to its content and manner of observance in Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra by Samantabhadra who probably lived in the second century A. D. It is a work of rare merit by one who was called the propounder of the law of Jinas (*praṇetā jinaśāsanasya*). He defined Sallekhanā as "a vow to be adopted for seeking liberation of the soul from the body as a religious duty during a calamity, severe famine, old age or illness from which there is no escape or against which there is no remedy. The all-seers (*sakala-darśinaḥ*) praise *saṃnyāsa-maraṇa* (i. e. *sallekhanā*) as the fruit of penance. Therefore everyone should seek his fortune in the *samādhi-maraṇa*. He who adopts the vow should, with a pure mind, give up friendship, enmity, company and possessiveness; he should forgive his relatives, companions and servants and should, with sweet words, ask for pardon. He should discuss frankly with his Guru (Preceptor) all the sins committed by himself, or sins which he abetted others to commit, or consented to their commission by others, and abide by the great vow till death. During the period, he should wholly efface from his mind all grief, fear, regret, affection, hatred, prejudice etc., and with

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strength of mind and enthusiasm, he should keep his mind supremely happy with the nectar of spiritual knowledge. He should gradually give up food and take liquids like milk, butter-milk etc. Later on he should even give up milk etc. and take only warm water. Thereafter he should give up even warm water and fast according to his own capacity and quit the body while engrossed in his mind with the meditation of the five salutation *mantras* (*pañcanamaskāra-mantra*). It is ordained that during the observance of the vow, he should avoid the five transgressions : (1) a feeling that it would have been better if death would come a little later; (2) wishing for a speedy death; (3) entertaining fear as to how he would bear the pangs of death; (4) remembering friends and relatives at the time of death; (5) wishing for a particular kind of fruit as a result of penance.[2]

Umasvāmi has made a brief reference to this vow in his *Tattvarthādhigamasūtra* which is a compendium of the Principles of Jainism and has laid down that Sallekhanā should be adopted most willingly or voluntarily when death is very near.[3]

Reference has already been made to the verses of Samantabhadra about the mental attitude of the person who had adopted the vow. He should be pure in thoughts and must have severed all connections, having forgiven everybody and asked everybody's pardon in sweet words. A person with Right Faith and Right Knowledge would always believe that being born a human being is itself a rare chance for annihilitation of all Karmas and that increased attachments to relatives and friends, business and occupations, and accumulations of property of any kind would only entangle the soul with new Karmas of different kinds of varying intensity. These ties are all due to Karmas. They have nothing to do with the individual and the individual has nothing to do with them. Every kind of relationship and attachment perish-

2. *Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra*, Verses 122-29.
3. *Reality*, Canto VII, Sutra 22.

es with the body. Such thoughts will create a sense of detachment and free the mind from passions of every kind like love, anger, greed and pride. The mind would be all peace and calm turned inwards with equanimity.

How can one acquire complete peace of mind before adopting the Vow? The person concerned should make a frank and full confession of his actions and thoughts before his preceptor. He should discuss with his spiritual Guru whatever sins he might have committed or might have been committed by others at his instance or with his consent till that date, without hesitation or sense of secracy and observe all the great five vows till death. In case it is not possible to approach a saint or an Ācārya, one should sit calmly, meditate upon the *pañca-parameṣṭhis* and recall to one's own mind all types of sins and transgressions either committed by oneself or committed at one's instigation. He should shut out all evil thoughts. If he is suffering from some deadly or serious disease, he should endure all the pangs with equanimity and tranquillity without exhibiting any signs of suffering, with an inborn conviction that the disease itself is the fruit of one's own Karma.

That the mind should be freed from all passions and infirmities before undertaking the fast has been emphasised by all saints or learned men who have written on the subject. Vīranandi has discussed fully the vow of Sallekhanā in his book : Ācārasāra. He says that for a successful observance of the vow, a monk should select such locality where the king is religious-minded, where the people have great devotion towards the Ācārya and where the subjects are not poor or penniless. This is a precaution against disturbances or obstructions of any kind during the course of the observance. Such a precaution is necessary to ensure external peace during the period of vow. He should have no love for his body and no attachment towards any of the things, mobile or immobile (*cetana* and *acetana*) or for possessions of any type. He should have no affection or attachment to-

wards his people or disciples. He must have conquered all afflications (*parīṣahas*). All these are preliminary to adoption of the vow. A monk's preparation is spread over a period of twelve years. He should spend the period in meditation and gradual change of foods from the solids to liquids. He should choose such season as will not disturb his bodily fluids (i. e. *pitta*, *vāta* and *kapha*). The Sallekhanā of the body should be preceded by *kaṣāya-sallekhanā* or the elimination of all passions and mental weaknesses.[4] As has been already mentioned, Ācārya Samantabhadra requires that the mind should be freed from sorrow, fear, remorse, hatred, affection or prejudices etc. and that the mind should be filled with the ambrosial knowledge of the Scriptures that would give him strength and joy.

There are clear and unequivocal directives against adoption of the vow of Sallekhanā without gauging that death is very near. A classical instance in this behalf is that of Ācārya Samantabhadra himself. When he wished to take the vow due to the impossibility of living a life in accordance with religious restriction as he suffered from an incurable disease called *bhasmaroga*, he approached his Guru for permission. The latter saw through his intuitive knowledge that the Ācārya had yet a long spell of life, with potentialities of making a very significant contribution to Jaina philosophical literature. He accordingly declined to grant him permission. An approximate assessment of the remaining span of life is necessary in order to adjust the nature of fasting.

Samantabhadra has explained how one should purify the mind and acquire mental and spiritual poise before adopting the vow. He has indicated how there should be gradual curtailment of food while fasting and how the mind should be engrossed in meditation of the *pañca-namaskāra-mantra*. The purity and calmness of the mind should not be disturbed by any of the five transgressions. Any one of the transgressions can affect the poise and tranquility of the mind and divert

4. *Ācārasāra*, Canto X.

the attention from meditation to mundane thoughts so as to affect the very nature of the meditation itself. The ascetic or the householder who has taken the vow should, while fasting, exert himself to attain complete detachment, purity of mind, and meditation with concentration on the real nature of the soul.

Reference may be made at this stage to the eighth Canto of *Sagāra Dharmāmṛta* (Religious Nectar for the Householder) by Āśādhara. The work was composed before Vikrama Saṁvat 1300. He has emphasised the need for protection of the body so long as it is useful for attainment of Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. The body is mortal; if it dies, you can have another body; but if you sacrifice religion for the sake of your body, you cannot regain the sanctity of your religion which helps you in your spiritual realization. When life is coming to an end by natural cause or some calamity like a disease, or attack from an enemy, it is proper to adopt a vow of death by fasting and meditation in fulfilment of the religious vows and practices.[5]

Jain monks and house-holders become accustomed to fasting while following their normal course of religious life. Dr. Hermann Jacobi who has correctly assessed this aspect of Jaina life has stated, " Among austerities, fasting is the most conspicuous; the Jainas have developed it to a kind of art and reached a remarkable proficiency in it. The usual way of fasting is to eat only one meal every second, third, fourth day, and so on down to half a year. Another form of fasting is starving oneself to death (*maraṇāntikī saṃlekhanā*)..."[6]

The Ācārāṅga Sūtra has explained three forms of death or Sallekhanā. They are *bhaktapratyakhyana maraṇa*, *iṅgita maraṇa* and *pādapopagamana maraṇa*. The last two are distinguished by restriction of the movement of the person and the motion of his limbs.

5. *Sāgara Dharmāmṛta*, Canto VIII, Sutra 5.

6. *Studies in Jainism*, pp. 33–34.

The *bhaktapratyākhyāna maraṇa* is explained in the Eighth Lesson of Lecture 7. A pious layman or an ascetic who has gained full self-control and knowledge should continue his contemplation after knowing the full details of the methods of observing this form of death. He should know what are the mental and bodily obstacles involved in the observance of the vow and adopt it when he feels that his death is near at hand. He should subdue all passions and take little food. He should endure all hardships, but if he falls ill, he is free to resume taking food. He should neither yearn for life nor for death. He should be indifferent to both and continue his contemplation. He should free himself from all internal or bodily attachments and strive to acquire absolute purity. With complete equanimity of mind, he should continue to be engrossed in his penance. He should spread the straw after thoroughly examining the ground to convince himself that it is free from living beings like ants etc. He should then lie down on that straw quietly, patienty bearing pain or other inconveniences that he might feel then. He should desist from entertaining any worldly feeling. He should neither rub nor kill any living beings which might feed on his flesh and blood or crawl upon him. He should not stir from his position if these beings feed on his body. He should meet death with equanimity when the end comes to him.[7]

Itvara or *Iṅgita maraṇa* is a more exalted form of death which is prescribed for a well-controlled and instructed monk. He should desist from doing, causing, or allowing to be done any movement of the body, speech or mind. He should lie on bare ground after full inspection of the same and should not use any grass. He should bear all pain without longing for food or other comfort. When the monk becomes weak, he should strive to be calm and quiet. He should not stir or exhibit any movement. When he is tired of lying down, he may stand up with passive limbs; when tired of

7. *Jaina Sūtras*, translated by Herman Jacobi, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. 22, pp. 75-76.

standing, he may sit down or walk about. He should regulate the motions of his organs. If the place becomes swarmed with insects, he should search for a cleaner place without remaining at a place which is likely to give rise to sin. He should be free from sin and bear all pains. He should meet his death calmly.[8]

Pādapopagamana or *Pāoavagamana* is a still more difficult method. A monk should not stir from one's place and check all motions of the body. Having examined a spot of bare ground, free from living beings, he should fix himself up to the place. He should be wholly unmindful of his body, even if he was to suffer mortification of his flesh. He should put up with all dangers and troubles knowing full well that they are natural processes in the dissolution of the body. He should realise that eternal bliss is the goal of his life, without entertaining any idea of greed or nourishing any desire. He should seek enlightenment in the contemplation of the eternal characteristics of the soul and should not be carried away by delusions about life.

A monk or a pious layman should reach the end of his life without any attraction to external objects after having patiently chosen any one of the three methods for attainment of Nirvāṇa.[9]

In his book called *Mūlācāra* (Basic Conduct), Kundakunda Ācārya deals with the important rules of conduct for the ascetics. In the first Canto, he deals with the five great vows, the five religious observances (*samiti*), and the other obligatory duties. In the second Canto, he deals with the abondonment of five sins and describes the manner in which an ascetic should acquire concentration, how he should exchange his thoughts with his Guru and thereafter ask for pardon. He states that death is of three kinds : *Bāla maraṇa, Bāla-paṇḍita maraṇa* and *Paṇḍita maraṇa.*[10] *Bāla maraṇa* is

8. *Ibid*, pp. 76–77.
9. *Ibid*, pp. 77–78.
10. *Mūlācāra*, by Kundakunda Acārya, Verse 31.

the death of an individual who has right faith but who does not possess self-control. The second kind of death is that which a house-holder who has reached the fifth stage of his spiritual progress, who is unable to abstain from the *himsā* of one-sensed beings but has abstained from the *himsa* of two-sensed beings and is still in a state of indecision in the matter of self-restraint, may adopt. *Paṇḍita maraṇa* is the death of an ascetic who has attained pure knowledge about his own self. The death of Tirthaṅkaras, of the Gaṇadharas who have attained pure knowledge and of the ascetic who has obtained pure knowledge is called *Pāṇḍita-paṇḍita-maraṇa*. The author then describes what status and sufferings which persons dying with perverted attitudes etc. attain after death. He does not however describe the procedure which should be followed by an ascetic who adopts the vow of Sallekhanā. He has described very efficiently the path to liberation. In crossing an ocean, a good boat, a skilled boatsman and knowledge of winds is necessary. In crossing the ocean of Saṁsāra, Right Knowledge is the boatsman as such knowledge enables to find out what is good or bad for himself; Right Conduct is the boat; *dhyana* or meditation is the wind. An ascetic can cross the ocean in his boat of Right Conduct, with the skill of his Right Knowledge and by regulating the progress with his power of meditation.

Since liberation of the soul from the bondage of Karma is the ideal to be realized, the various vows and austerities are intended to subserve the main object. We are now in a position to indicate in a nutshell what the characteristics of this vow are (1) It is the basic conception of Jainism that the body is different from the soul. (2) While the body is the result of one's own Karmas, the soul is pure and perfect, with inherent qualities of infinite Faith, Knowledge, Bliss and Power. It is the Karma that creates a veil and causes numerous limitations on the exercise of those powers, besides being the cause of births and deathc. (3) The various vows prescribed by the religion for observance in daily life are intended to

purify the body and mind, help the individual to lead a life of love and compassion. While fasting is intended to curb the cravings of the body, meditation and introspection are intended to assist the soul in its purification, elevation and realization. The body is the primary instrument which is required to be trained to meet the needs of the soul in its efforts to rid of the Karmas. But this is a task that has to be worked out all through life by devotion and austerities of various kinds. (4) But when the body is likely to perish due to old age, incurable disease, calamity etc. and the householder or the monk is convinced that it is not possible to live any longer according to the tenets of religion by observing the daily vows and rules of conduct, he considers it proper to adopt the vow of Sallekhanā. The vow involves voluntary quitting of the body by planned fasting and meditation, as such a course is preferable to a life of irreligion, or pining and painful death. (5) Before accepting the vow, the monk or the house-holder must consider whether he is nearing his end. The conquest of all passions and afflictions must precede subjection of the body to any kind of austerity. (6) There should be complete detachment from all ties of affection and worldly attachments. The mind should be free from prejudice and ill-will towards anybody. (7) Supreme forgiveness towards every one must govern the mind after having begged for forgiveness from others towards oneself. (8) The mind should be full of joy and equanimity. (9) The acceptance of the vow must be voluntary. The fruits of religious merit acquired all through life should not be allowed to be frittered away just when the end is nearing. (10) The mind should not falter by any of the transgressions either by wishing for postponement of death or immediate end. Death by Sallekhanā according to spiritual rules is the victory of the soul over Karma and consequential infirmities of the mind and body, which worldly existence might have brought into being. It is an act of fulfilment and a fitting culmination to a life of piety and religion.

SECTION III

SALLEKHANĀ IN PRACTICE

It is an undisputed fact of history that Śri Bhadrabāhu, the last of the Śruta Kevalis, migrated to South India along with twelwe thousand ascetics and lay followers sometime in 290 B. C. as he apprehended that there was to be a severe famine in the North lasting over twelve years. He was accompanied by his disciple Emperor Candragupta Maurya who reigned as emperor from 315 B. C. to 291 B. C. and has been referred to by the Greek historians as Sandrokottos. The details of this event are given in one of the "Inscriptions at Sravaṇa Beḷgoḷ" which were published by the Department of Archaeological Survey of Mysore, with B. Lewis Rice as Director of Researches and Secretary to the Government of Mysore. A revised edition under the title of Epigraphia Carnāṭikā, Vol. II was published in 1923 by R. Narasimhachar who was then the director of the Department. The relevant inscriptions on Sallekhanā were first studied by me from the first edition; and I noted their numbers with reference to the earlier publication. Hence the corresponding numbers in the revised volume have been also added as second number in each bracket.

The first inscription states that as Bhadrabāhu predicted at Ujjaini that there would be a dreadful famine which would last for twelve years, the Jaina Sangha migrated under his leadership from the Northern region to the South and arrived at Kaṭavapra which came to be known subsequently as Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷ. There an Ācarya by name Prabhācandra perceived that he was nearing the end of his life; so he sent away all his disciples under the leadership of Viśākha Muni. He remained alone with a single disciple on the high peak

of the mountain to practice "*tapas-samādhi*". He performed penance on the high expanse of the cold rocks, quitted the body and accomplished *samādhi*. Mention is made at the end of the inscription that "in course of time, seven hundred *Ṛṣis* similarly accomplished *samādhi*". The inscription opens with a praise to Venerable Vardhamāna, as the giver of the holy faith and one who had attained perfect bliss as the Arhat; as one who by his supreme merit acquired the name of Tīrthaṅkara and whose creed had spread to the world. Bhadrabāhu is described as a *svāmī* whose line had been rendered illustrious by a succession of great men tracing their decent from the venerable supreme Ṛṣi Gautama-gaṇadhara whose immediate disciples were Lohārya, Jaṃbu, Viṣṇudeva, Aparājita, Govardhana, Bhadrabāhu, Viśākha, Proṣṭhila, Kṛttikārya, Jayanāma, Siddhārtha, Dhṛtiṣeṇa, Buddhila and other teachers. This inscription is on a rock to the south of the Pārśvanātha temple on the Chandragiri or Chikka-beṭṭa.[1] Though this inscription does not mention the name of Candragupta, two others which are just near it state that Bhadrabāhu and Candragupta were "twin munis" (*munīndra-yugma*)[2]. These inscriptions are of about 650 A. D. There are two other inscriptions of about 900 A. D. on the bank of the river Kāveri near Seringapatam which describe the summit of Kaḷabappa (i. e. Chandragiri Hill) as being hallowed by the foot-prints of the two great sages Bhadrabāhu and Candragupta.[3]

Prof. S. R. Sharma accepts the historicity of this event and states, "The conclusion of the late Dr. V. A. Smith, regarding the plausibility of the persistent tradition about Candragupta Maurya having accompanied Bhadrabāhu (the last of the Jaina *śruta kevalins*) to Mysore and died there by Sallekhanā may be accepted without much ado." He has

1. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. II, Ins. 1.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 17 and 18 (3). Figures in brackets refer to the numbers of the same inscriptions in the revised edition.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, Ins. 147 and 148.

further observed that the Jaina tradition holds the field and that no alternative account exists. Dr. Rice also accepts the view and says that "these events must be assigned to the date somewhere about 250 B. C." and that the inscription "unquestionably belongs to the earliest part of that era and is not certainly later than 400 A. D." Narasimhachar assigns about 600 A. D. as the era of the inscription.

Ācārya Ariṣṭanemi was a great Ācārya who had come to the South with many disciples. He was received by queen Kampita and the king Kindikā. The Ācārya went up the Kaṭavapra hill, leaving the whole group of his *gaṇa*. He gave up his food and became engrossed in pure meditation on the Self and attained perfection. He quitted his body and was honoured by the *siddhas* and *vidyādharas*. This inscription is of 650 A. D.[4]

Upavāsapara (devoted to fasts) appears to have been an ascetic very much devoted to fasting. His spiritual Guru was Vṛṣabhanandi. The former had conquered all his passions and had acquired great learning. He had achieved great renown. He perceived by his konwledge that his end was near. He adopted *saṃnyasana* according to the prescribed rules on the summit of the mountain Kaṭavapra (Chandragiri Hill) and attained celestial happiness by destroying all his Karmas. It is asserted with confidence that every kind of happiness can be acquired by penance. The inscription is dated 650 A. D.[5]

Some of the inscriptions which record the observances of Sallekhanā by certain ascetics and others are very brief and do not bear any date or year, though Narasimhachar assigns about 700 A. D. to them. One of them records the death of Nāgamati, a female disciple of an ascetic of Chittūr in Adiyār Nāḍu.[6] Nāgamati appears to have been a nun, and she expired after observing the vow for three months. Chittūr in Adiyār Nāḍu was within the jurisdiction of Pallava Kings.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 11.
5. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 75.
6. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 2.

An ascetic by name Charita Śrī died on the Kalbappal mountain, that is, Chandragiri, after observing the vow. He appears to have been a *muni* of high merit as he is described as "one praised by the heavenly *munis* (*suravara-munibhiḥ-stutya*) and as master of heavenly wisdom (*suravidyāvallabhe-ndra*). He attained salvation after keeping the vow of Munis.[7]

A holy nun by name Jambu Nāyagir expired after observing the vow for a period of one month.[8] There is a simple record that Panapa Bhaṭṭāraka of Nedumbore adopted the vow of silence and expired after observing the vow of Sallekhanā for a period of one month.[9]

Baladeva Guru was the disciple of Dharmasena Guru. He expired after keeping the vow of *saṃnyāsana* for one month. Dharmasena is described as Guru from Vilmade of Kitur. It is difficult to identify the names of places now.[10]

Ugrasena Guru was the disciple of Paddini Guru of Malenur. He expired after observing the vow of *saṃnyāsana* for one month. There are no other details.[11] Śrī Guṇasena of Kottār was a *muni*. He was the disciple of Muni Guru of Agaḷe. Guṇasena expired after observing the vow. There is no mention of the period or of the word '*saṃnyāsana*'.[12]

A nun by name Dhannekuttarevi was the chief disciple of Perumāl Guru. She expired after Sallekhanā.[13] There are no other details. So also, there are no details about the death by Sallekhanā of Otlakkal Guru. While No. 12 is partly erased; it simply states: "Guru of the holy *tīrtha* having observed the vow."[14] The next one is similar. It does not disclose the name of the *muni* but states that the ascetic of Talekadu, the disciple of Kalavīr Guru expired after keeping the vow of *saṃnyāsana* for 21 days.[15]

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 3 (12).
8. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 5 (18).
9. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 6 (9).
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 7, (24).
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 8 (25).
12. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 9 (8).
13. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 10 (7).
14. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 11 (6).
15. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 13 (3).

The inscription is in the form of reverential salutation to Nāgasena Guru who expired after keeping the vow in accordance with the procedure (*saṃnyāsanavidhi*). He was the disciple of Ṛśabhasena Guru. Nāgasena is described as one who had conquered the world of his enemies, worshipped by kings, given up his fortune and conquered his desires and pride. In other words, he had achieved victory over all his passions and desires. He was pious and serene so as to evoke all reverence.[16]

We find the description of a beautiful area near a hill surpassing in beauty the *nandanavana* (heavenly garden of Indra). Baladeva Muni was the son (i. e., disciple) of Kanaka Sena, the most virtuous. He was preaching all to praise the Lord, to show an ocean of goodness to creatures and to practise virtue. He had himself forsaken everything and given himself up to devotion. He was practising penance on the summit of the mountain and departed to the Siddhaloka (*siddhalokaṃ gataḥ*)[17]

Śāntisena Muni observed complete fast (for days) on the top of a mountain and attained 'salvation' (the state of not being born again). There is reference to Bhadrabāhu and Candragupta as the twin munis (*munīndra-yugma*) and to their religion as the true faith. The said Śāntisena Munīśa followed the religion of the twin saints. We can safely infer from these details that by the time of this incident, Candragupta himself had become a monk like Bhadrabāhu whom he had followed after giving up his kingdom. It is consistent with the tradition that a Muni, Candragupta adopted the vow of Sallekhanā and attained salvation. The date of the inscription may be about 650 A. D.[18]

The account about Singanandi having adopted the vow of Sallekhanā and expired is given in one line. There are no significant details.[19]

16. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 14 (34).
17. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 15 (2).
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 17 (18).
19. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 19 (32).

Nachchikavve seems to have been a member of the royal family. Since the inscription is incomplete, it is impossible either to trace her family or the names of her parents. She is described as *kumārike* which has been interpreted by Dr. Rice as "daughter of". It may as well mean that she was unmarried. She attained the wealth of the world of Gods (*sura-loka vibhūti aididar*).[20]

It is impossible to find out the name of the Muni who is said to have risen to the position of a *siddha*. He is said to have been lofty in his virtues and the descendent of a great religious teacher. There appears to be a group of *sādhavīs* or nuns (*sādhvī-gaṇa*) with him, all residing on the top of a mountain.[21]

There is another inscription dated 700 A. D. narrating the death by Sallekhanā of one Akṣayakīrti who came from Madhura in the South. He had been bitten by a snake due to some curse. Those who were acquainted with the symptoms were doubtful as to how he would fare. So he took the vow with great devotion on the holy mountain and attained liberation "to the happiness of the world of gods." The inscription was written by Pallavachāri.[22] The next inscription does not give the name of the ascetic. The only detail that is available is that "the great *guru* accomplished *samādhi* and attained perfection having observed the vow."[23]

Guṇadeva Sūri was well-versed in the sciences. He ascended the mountain Kaḷvap and practised twelve kinds of penance. He fulfilled the vow in all aspects and reached the abode of gods (700 A. D.)[24]

There is a similar brief epitaph about Masena, a sage of supreme glory. He observed the vow on the mountain in Kalvappu, in consequence with the rules of the *siddhas* enunciated by the *saṅghas* and ascended the high heaven (700

20. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 20 (26). 21. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 21 (29).
22. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 21. 23. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 22.
24. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 23.

A. D.)[25] The next one simply states that Mellagavasa-guru of Inungur expired on the same mountain (700 A. D.)[26]

Due to numerous ascetics adopting the vow of Sallekhanā, the mountain had become hallowed and it is called *tīrthagiri* (i. e. holy hill) (700 A. D.). Sasimati was a nun; she was possessed of noble qualities and had performed many devotional acts. She had studied the scriptures extensively. She came to Raḷvappu and saw that her end was near. She thought to herself : "This is the course I have to adopt." She ascended the holy hill and observed the vow of *saṃnyāsana*. She ascended the heaven.[27] The next inscription does not mention the name of the ascetic who attained salvation on the hill by observing the vow of Sallekhanā.[28]

Śaucadārya (i. e. one who had attained purity) had attained greatness by his penance. He came to the hill with great joy and ascended the same. He observed the vow and obtained happiness equal to that of Indra (750 A. D.)[29] Similarly another ascetic by name Mahādeva who was the chief of ascetics felt that he was nearing his end and ascended the great mountain. He performed great penance and reached the heaven (700 A. D.)[30]

Candradevācārya had obtained great renown in Nādi kingdom for his modesty, purity of conduct and great penance. He observed the vow on the mountain (which is now described as the Ṛṣi mountain) of Kaḷavappu and attained happiness being honoured by gods (700 A. D.).[31]

Nandiṣeṇa was the chief of sages. He was convinced that the pleasures, beauty, treasures, wealth and power were all fleeting like the rainbow or the streaks of lightning and that, that was the supreme truth. He was strong-minded. He adopted *saṃnyāsana* and went to the world of gods (700 A. D.).[32]

25. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 27.
26. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 28.
27. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 76.
28. *Ibid*, Vol. II, Ins. 77.
29. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 79.
30. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 80.
31. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 84.
32. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 83.

No. (93) is partly erased and hence the name of the ascetic is not visible. He seems to have belonged to Koḷattūr Sangha and attained the exalted position in the world of gods by observing *samādhi*. On the same hill, Indranandi Ācārya attained the everlasting splendour of the kingdom of Indra by practising *samādhi*, after freeing himself from delusion and subduing all his passions.[33]

Rājamati was a nun belonging to the holy Nimilūr Sangha. She had attained pre-eminence for the purity of her conduct and virtues. She went up the hill, adopted the *saṃnyāsana* and ascended the abode of heaven (700 A. D.).[34] Another nun of the same Sangha by name Anantamati practised twelve kinds of penance according to rules, observed the vow on the mountain Kaṭavapra and attained the state of matchless happiness in the world of gods (700 A. D.).[35] An Ācārya of the same Sangha adopted *saṃnyasana* and attained happiness.

The next five inscriptions seem to have been partially worn out. Guṇakīrti was an ascetic of lofty devotion and he abandoned his body on the mountain. Maunī Ācārya was an ascetic who belonged to the Navilūr Sangha which has already been referred to. His disciple was Vṛṣabhanandi who accomplished the vow of *saṃnyāsana* after realising the real nature of worldly existence. He reached the heavenly abode. The third in the group refers to a nun by name Maviabbe. She severed all bonds and ascended the hill and attained the happiness of gods. Ārya was the chief of the Mayūragrāma Sangha. He always exercised great self-control and accomplished *samādhi* by meditation with zeal and reached the matchless world of gods. The sage Meghanandi of the illustrious Navilūr Sangha attained perfection at the holy place. All inscriptions are of 700 A. D.[36] Another inscription says that Nandi Muni

33. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 93.
34. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 97.
35. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 98.
36. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 105 (9).

was famous for his penance. He observed the vow on the hill and attained perfection.[37]

Age seems to have worn out the inscription which states clearly that the sage Devasena was famous for his numerous virtues. He felt that death was at hand. He observed the vow and ascended to heaven (700 A. D.).[38]

Prabhāvatī was a nun who belonged to the Navilūr Sangha already mentioned. She observed the vow on the mountain and attained a body endowed with natural beauty (700 A. D.).[39] The same inscription refers to accomplishment of *samadhi* on the mountain by Damitamati who belonged to the Mayūragrāma Sangha.

In A. D. 800 Ariṣṭanemi Deva ended his life at the holy place of Kaḷbappu having attained the period of liberation.[40] Just above this writing, there is a record of some other personage having attained liberation by *saṃnyasana*. This event might be of the same period.[41]

Vaijabbe who is mentioned as the daughter of "illustrious Beṭṭadeva" (950 A. D.) observed the vow of *saṃnyāsana* and died on the mountain, "the holy place of Kaḷbappu." It is not clear whether Beṭṭadeva referred to here is the same king Viṣṇuvardhana who is said to have assumed that name after he was converted to Vaiṣṇavism, his prior name being Biṭṭideva. Since the details are wanting, it is difficult to say anything further about the identity of the lady.[42]

Mārasiṃha Ganga was a famous king of the Ganga dynasty and was a devout Jaina. He has been described as Ganga Mahārājādhirāja, Ganga Cūḍāmaṇi, Ganga Vidyādhara Siṃha etc. He made a grant to the Śaṃkha Basti (a Jaina temple of that name) at Laxmeshwar (Dt. Dharwar). He was learned in grammar, logic, philosophy and literature. He

37. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 111.
38. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 113.
39. *Ibid*, Vol. II, Ins. 114.
40. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 14.
41. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 15.
42. *Ibid*, Vol. II, Ins. 68.

was renowned as a hero in battles. He conquered many battles and won fame in many lands. The inscription (974 A. D.) which is engarved on the pillar of Kūge Brahma Deva describes him as "the sole hero of the world." He reigned from 961 A. D. to 974 A. D. He is said to have promoted works of merit. He adopted the vow of Sallekhanā in the presence of his Guru Shri Ajitasena Bhaṭṭāraka of Bankāpur (Dt. Dharwar) like a faithful worshipper and departed to the dwelling of the gods (*Bankapuradoḷ Ajitasena-bhaṭṭārakara sripādasannidhiyoḷ ārādhanavidhiyoḷ...samādhiyaṃ sadhisidam.*)[43] Referring to this event, Prof. S. R. Sharma says: "Hence it was no morbid sentimentalist who exhibited this classical example of singular devotion to his faith, and fully evoked the admiration of his contemporaries. The result is seen in the erection of the great statue of Gommata by his general Cāuṇḍarāya at Śravaṇa Belgola, which is in itself a monument to the zeal of the Jainas during that great age."[44]

The name of the *Śrāvakī* who attained salvation is Sāviyabbe. She is described as the "incarnation of wisdom" and renowned for her religious faith. This royal princess is said to have attained greater fame than Sītā and she was unequalled in her practice of the Jaina religion (*śrāvaka-dharma*). She had a noble birth like Sītā, beauty like Devakī, fame like Arundhatī and faith in Jinendra like Sāviyabbe. She impressed every one as if she was *Jina-sāsana-devatā.* She shone with all these qualities and died in *samādhi* (61–139).[45] Dr. Rice has mentioned the date of the inscription as 974 A. D. while R. Narasimhachar mentions 950 A. D.[46]

There is an inscription (982 A. D – 133) in verse on the four sides of a pillar in front of the Gandha-vāraṇa Basti (temple). It records the death by Sallekhanā of king Indra

43. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 38.
44. *Jainism and Karnātaka Culture*, p. 19.
45. *Epigraphia Carnātica*, Vol. II, Ins. 61 (139).
46. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. 43.

Rāja. He was praised by all people as he attained the wealth of the heavenly abode of Indra, the god of gods. He was the abode of "fortune, victory, learning, generosity, valour, glory and greatness." There are datailed descriptions about his celibacy and successful victory over the temptations of charming women. He appears to have been a staunch follower of the five vows, "never uttering a falsehood under any circumstance."[47]. He was great in courage, magnanimity and self-confidence. Dr. B. A Saletore has said: "The last prominent name of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa House is that of king Indra IV. This expert in the game of polo died by the method of Sallekhanā at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa in A. D. 982. Two inscriptions prove this: one is the Gandhavāraṇa Basti inscription at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa and the other is Kāmagaṇḍamanahaḷḷi stone inscription found in the Sira Taluka (Dt. Tumkur). The former relates the following: That on the date (specified) having observed the vow with a peaceful mind, Indra Rāja praised by the people, acquired all the great power of the king of gods (Indra). The latter inscription records the fact that with an undisturbed mind performing the vows, the world-renowned Indra Rāja gained the glory of the king of all the gods (Indra). Evidently the celebrated example set by the Emperor Candragupta Maurya was not forgotten by the Karnāṭaka monarchs even in the tenth Century A. D."[48].

The inscription to the west of the Terina Basti begins with a tribute to the king Rāja Cuḍāmaṇi and refers to Piṭṭuga, a great hero of the Kali Age, brave in battle and able in war, praised by poets. He departed to the abode of Indra with a mind filled with auspicious thoughts (*śubha-pariṇāmade*). He was in perfect peace of mind and deep in meditation at the feet of his Guru (*gurucaraṇa-mūladoḷ śubha pariṇāmade*). This event took place on the 10th day of the dark half of ***adhika Āṣāḍha*** in 982 A. D.[49]

47. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 57.
48. *Medieval Jainism*, p. 40.
49. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. II, Ins. 58 (134).

Nīti Mahārāja adopted the vow of *saṁnyāsana* and ended his life. This short inscription is found in Manjrābād Taluka. It is of the year 1035 A. D. It is on a piece of stone found near the gate of village Baḷḷu.[50]

Humcha is a Jaina place of pilgrimage in the Shimoga District and there are numerous inscriptions. One of them (1037 A. D.) refers to the construction of the *pañcakūṭa basadi* and the grants made to the temple etc. In the enclosure of the temple to the South there is a record which has been effaced at many places, relating to the death of Lakṣmīsena Bhaṭṭāraka who reached the state of godhood after long penance, on the 13th day of the bright half of the month of *Kārtika*. The name of his Guru is not decipherable, though it is said that he belonged to the *Mūla-sangha* and *Pustaka-gaccha*. In the same year Pārśvasena Bhaṭṭāraka practised Sallekhanā and went to heaven on the 9th day of the dark half of the month of Caitra (1098 A. D.)[51].

Prabhācandradeva's death is commemorated by an inscription (1044 A. D.) which was found in the field of the Gowda of Doḍḍakaṇagal in Somawar Peth Taluka. He was the disciple of Śubhacandradeva belonging to the *Mūla-sangha, Desiya Gaṇa* and *Pustaka-gaccha*. He obtained liberation from his body in the month of Caitra on the 5th day of the bright half of the month in the Tāraṇa Saṃvatsara. The inscription is located in a field at Doḍḍakaṇagale in Somawār Peth Taluka[52].

There is an inscription (1050 A. D.) of some significance relating to Jakkiyabbe who expired after adopting the vow of Sallekhanā, decided to do so without hesitation saying : " I will obtain *mukti*." She took leave of her relatives and she meditated in her mind " illustrious feet of the highest benefactor " that is of Lord Jinendra. She gained *samādhi* to the wonder of all people. Her husband Edayyā was the

50. *Ibid*., Vol. V, Ins. 55.
51. *Ibid*., Vol. VIII, Ins. 42.
52. *Ibid*., Vol. I, Ins. 89.

chief *śrāvaka*. She was the *srāvakī* of Kastūri Bhaṭṭāraka who administered the vow to her. The inscription is located on a tank bund at Nallūr in Virāja Peth Talukā.[53]

In the same village on a bund near a place called Titaramad, there is another inscription (1050 A. D.), the top portion of which is broken and lost. The first part refers to one Biḷiyaseṭṭi who gained the glory of gods after falling at the feet of all the *yatis* (monks) with devotion. Then follows that part detailing the death of Kivirāyya, the ruling chief of Muduvaṅga-nāḍa. He observed the vow for twelve days in the Chengaḷa Jaina temple and expired. His sons Bāki and Būki set up the memorial.[54]

Guṇasena Paṇḍita was the disciple of Puṣpa Sena Vratīndra who was skilled in the exposition of the Jain Siddhānta, and belonged to an eminent Sangha called the Nandi Sangha. The Guru was well-versed in grammar, Āgamas and the study of Ratnatraya. Guṇasena was a great scholar in the holy scriptures of the Arhats. This illustrious Guṇasena Paṇḍita Deva gained the abode of Mokṣa-Lakṣmī on Tuesday, the 9th day of the dark half of the Caitra in Śaka Year 986 under the Pūrva Bhādrapada Nakṣatra (1064 A. D.). The inscription is to be found on a stone by the side of Pārśvanātha Temple at Muḷḷūr in Somawar Peth Talukā.[55]

On a stone in the Kallu-basti (stone temple) there is an epitaph stating that Caṇḍimayya's wife Boppavve adopted *saṃnyāsana* and went to heaven on Monday in the month of Pauṣya, Śukla Saṁvatsara (1090 A. D.) Caṇḍimayya was the treasurer of Right Hoysaḷa Deva and was well-known as the gem of Right Faith. His wife was meditating on the Jina and achieved that fulfilment which none else could.[56] At the same place, there is another stone recording the death of Śubhacandra-deva gaining heaven by means of *samādhi* according to rites. This was on Sunday, the 7th day of the dark

53. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Ins. 100.
54. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Ins. 101.
55. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Ins. 71.
56. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 198.

half of the month Pauṣya, Angirasa-Saṃvatsara (1093 A. D.). The inscription is partially erased. It states that Śubhacadra-deva was the disciple of Maladhāri-deva who had become famous for his severe penance. He was in the line of Śrī-Mūla Sangha of the Kundakunda descent, beloging to Lôkiyappe *basadi*.[57]

There are only four or five inscriptions in Tirthahalli Taluka relevant to our purpose. There is an instance of Sallekhanā by Cāliga-senabovā, the younger brother of Baylā-senabova and son of Vaijāna-senabovā. He was the lay disciple of Padmaprabhadeva. Knowing that his end had come, he died and ascended to heaven. The material particulars are erased (1103 A. D.).[58]

Opening with a prayer for victory to the Jina Śāsana, the inscription records the departure of Būci Rāja or Būcaṇa to the world of gods. He is described as the son of Lakkala Devi, wife of the General of the army. Apart from being the abode of all virtues, he was taking delight in the four kinds of *dāna* (gifts) viz. distribution of food, shelter, medicine and learning. He took refuge at the feet of Jina, severed all his associations on the tenth day of the bright half of Vaiśākha in A. D. 1113 and attained godhood with such peace of mind as evoked the approval of the wise. It is also mentioned that Būcaṇa Rāja was the disciple of Śubhacandra Siddhānta Deva of Śrī Mūla Saṅgha, Desiga-gaṇa, Pustaka-gaccha.[59]

It is well-known that there were a large number of Jaina Ācaryās and Munis who flourished in the South. Of the inscriptions which mention the names of some of them is the one in the *maṇṭapā* to the right of the temple known as the Yaraḍa-Kaṭṭeya Basti dated 1115 A. D. It begins with the praise of Nābheya-nātha (Ṛṣabha) and other Jinas who dispelled the mass of darkness consisting of heretical doctrines

57. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 199.
58. *Ibid*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 191.
59. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 46 (126).

and preached the religion which would last as long as the sun and moon exist. Reference is made to the illustrious Munis like Gautama, Padmanandi alias Kundakundācārya who by his lofty character acquired the power of moving in the air. Likewise Umāsvātī-munīśvara and Gṛdhapinchācārya who had acquired all knowledge have also been mentioned. It also mentions the names of Gollācārya, Traikālya Yogī, Soma Deva, Meghacandra, Jinavīrasena, Prabhācandra Siddhānta Deva etc. Besides, this inscription gives a detailed description about the passing away by Sallekhanā of Meghacandra Traividya Deva in the forenoon on the 14th day of the bright half of the month of Mārgaśira. Knowing that his end was nearing, he sat in the *palayaṅkāsana* pose meditating on the spirit and went to the world of gods. While in meditation, he fixed his mind "on the eternal truth and essence of the spirit," cast his body and went to heaven (*ananta-bodhātmakam ātma-tattvaṃ nidhāya cetasy apahaya heyam...*). The memorial seems to have been erected by Lakṣmīmati Devī, the wife of the General to Viṣṇu Vardhana, the king of the Hoysaḷas who had perfect faith in Jainism, through the wealthy residents of the place; it was consecrated with great splendour on an auspicious day. Lakṣmīmati is said to have been a very religious minded lady who gave freely the four gifts of food, shelter, medicine and learning. It also mentioned that the General Ganga Rāja repaired many ruined Jaina temples.[60]

Opening with the popular verse of praise (*Śrīmat parama-gambhīra* etc.) the inscriptions to the left of the Maṭha refers to Śrī Kundakunda who moved about four inches above the ground (*caturaṅgula cāraṇaḥ*) and spread the gospel of Vardhamāna. Devendra Siddhadeva, able and born in the line of Deśika Gaṇa was adored by the god of gods. Mention is also made of Divākara-nandi who belonged to the Pustaka-gaccha and Deśi-gaṇa and obtained great celebrity in the world for his extraordinary self-control and penance. It was

60. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 47 (127).

he who gave *dīkṣā* to Śrīmati Ganṭi who was well-versed in meditation, very liberal in making gifts, the pride of the virtuous, greatly endowed with the qualities of compassion and forgiveness, spreading the light of modesty and happiness, having attained fame in the whole world, conquered all the passions by her penance. She took the vow of *samādhi* and concentrating her attention with full faith at the feet of Jina, the Lord of the world, in the practice of austere penance, departed to the abode of the gods. This was in the Śaka year 1041 (1119 A. D.) in Viḷaṁbi Saṁvatsara, on the fifth day of the bright half of Phālguṇa. It was Wednesday. The memorial was erected by her disciple Manakabbe Ganṭi.[61] "It is clear from the last words" says Prof. S. R. Sharma, "that the excellent Srīmati Ganṭi was the *guru* of another Manakabbe Ganṭi; which clearly reveals the existence of a regular sisterhood of nuns ... Rice reasonably thought that there must have been a regular sisterhood of Digambara Jaina nuns in South India. The evidence in this behalf is quite convincing."[62] He also refers to another instance of Jakkiyabbe whose death by *saṃnyāsana* is referred to in an inscription in Coorg and observes : "Thurston says, there is still a sisterhood of nuns in South Arcot who shave and wear white cloth. These might be Digambaras and he says that all Jains there are Digambaras."

In those days, devotion to the religion of Jina appears to have been more common than now. There is an inscription in the *manṭapa* to the right side of Yarada Kaṭṭe Basti, referring to the death by Sallekhanā of Demiyakka or Demavati, the seniormost wife of Chāmuṇḍa Sheṭṭy, a merchant who wielded considerable influences with the kings. She was most charitable and made four kinds of gifts most liberally giving food, shelter, medicine and learning. She was like the agent of Śāsana Devatā to give protection to the supreme Jaina

61. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 139 (351).
62. *Jainism and Karnātaka Culture*, pp. 163–165.

faith. She seems to have constructed many Jaina temples and encouraged worship in temples. She has been described as if she had descended to the earth to protect the supreme Jaina religion. She herself was a great lover of the true religion. She took to *saṃnyāsana* and died after practising penance according to the *vidhi* or rules on the 11th day of the dark half of Phālguṇa in Śaka year 1042 (1120 A. D).[63]

Gaṅgarāja was one of the ministers of the Hoysala king Viṣṇuvardhana. His mother was Pocikabbe. She was the wife of Eca who was equal to Manu in pure conduct and was to be seen always in the groups of sages and learned men. She is said to have constructed many temples at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷā and other holy places. The inscription which is in the *manṭapa* to the South of the Cāmuṇḍarāya temple records her pious life and her death by Sallekhanā. It has been stated that she had attained great fame as one who had reached the height of virtues and whose spiritual attainments inspired great admiration. She subdued all her passions and weaknesses by repeating : "*namo Vītarāgaya*" (Salutation to the Conqueror of Passions). She attained godhood by practising Sallekhanā with ease (*sallekhanā sampadadindaṃ devi Pocāmbike surapadamaṃ leīleyiṃ sooregondaḷ*). This event took place on the 5th day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha in the Śaka year 1043 (1121 A. D.). Her son who erected the memorial has been praised. The text of the inscription was composed by Bava Rāja, a disciple of Prabhācandra Siddhānta Deva and was engraved by Vardhamānācāri, son of Hoysaḷācāri. The concluding part of the inscription showers such high praise on Gaṅga Rāja that one may easily infer that the minister was powerful, pious and "a gem of virtues."[64]

Mention has already been made that Śubhacandra Deva was the spiritual *guru* of the family of Gaṅga Rāja, the famous minister of Viṣṇuvardhana, the ocean of Jaina religion

63. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. II, Ins. 49 (129).
64. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 44 (118).

(*Jainadharmāmṛtāmbudhi*) and the sea of *samyaktva* (*Samyaktva-ratnākara*). On Friday, the 10th day of the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa in the Śaka Year 1045 (1123 A. D.), the great *yati* Śubhacandra Deva went into meditation and reached the world of gods. This inscription which is in the *maṇṭapa* to the right side of Cavuṇḍarāya Temple mentions the great Jaina Ācāryas: Divākaranandi Deva, the lord of ascetics, a royal swan in the lake of the Jaina doctrine; his disciple Gaṇḍavimuktadeva Maladhāri-munīndra of aweful penance, hard to be performed by others; the disciple of this emperor of good conduct was the resplendent Śubhacandra Deva. The text was composed by the disciple of Śubhacandra Deva by name Mardhimayya and engraved by Vardhamānācāri. The epitaph was set up by Gaṇa Rāja, the Chief of the Army — *maha-pradhāna daṇḍanāyaka.*[65]

Śrī Pārśvanātha temple at Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa has an important inscription which begins with a prayer to the last Tīrthaṅkara Vardhamāna and refers to the Gaṇadharas like Gautamasvāmi and to the Śrutakevalis including Bhadrabāhu. It gives a lengthy account of the Jaina Munis like Samantabhadra, Sumati Deva, Śrīvardhadeva, the author of the famous poem Cūḍāmaṇi, Vimalacandra, Indranandi, Hemasena, Puṣpasena Muni - whose colleague was Akalaṅka, and many others. It records the death of Malliṣeṇa-Maladhāri Deva by Sallekhanā, who is said to be possessed of unequalled patience, limitless compassion and completely free from desires. Though he was the head of Munis, he was revered for his humility and character. He had achieved glory for his penance. He took the vow of Sallekhanā which is famous in the Jaina scriptures and left his body at the feet of Jina to enter *svarga*, "absorbed in perfect penance and with his mind filled with joy." Just before he abandoned his body he composed the following verse extempore in the presence of those who had gathered to witness the *samādhi*: "Having obtained the triad of jewels mentioned in the *āgamas*, having refrained from causing pain

65. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 43 (117).

to all living beings and having asked forgiveness at the feet of Jina, we abandon the body and enter heaven."

> *Ārādhya ratnatrayamāgamoktam*
> *vidhāya niśśalyamaśeṣajantoḥ |*
> *Kṣamāṃ ca kṛtvā jinapādamūle*
> *dehaṃ parityajya divaṃ viśamaḥ ||*

This is of the year 1129 A. D.[66]

A pillar taken out from the water of a tank called 'Kancina ḍoṇe' bears an inscription of the Śaka year 1059 (1130 A. D.). It records the death of Hoysala Shetty who had got the titles of Tribhuvana-malla Chaladanka-rāya. He felt that he was nearing his end and took leave of all his relatives. With a full peace of mind, he observed the vow (of Sallekhanā) and went to the abode of gods. The inscription was got engraved by his highly religious and virtuous wife Cattikabbe.[67]

It is historically well-known that the Hoysala dynasty had Vinayāditya as the first ruler. He was a Jaina and his preceptor was Śāntideva. He was succeeded by his son Ereyānga. The latter's son Biṭṭideva came to the throne in 1109. Numerous inscriptions in Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa bear ample testimony to his valour and exploits. It is said that he was converted to Vaiṣṇavism by Rāmānuja. His queen Śāntalādevi who is famous in the history of Karnātaka as a patron of learning, art and religion continued to be a Jaina. She died by Sallekhanā. This inscription gives a brief history of the Hoysala dynasty as stated above and extols the bravery of Biṭṭideva or Viṣṇuvardhana. It states that Śāntalā was comparable to Sarasvatī, Pārvatī and Lakṣmī respectively in virtue, beauty and fortune. She is described as: " a lamp for the prosperity of her family, expert in singing and instrumental music, a rampart to the Jaina faith, delighting in the narration of stories relating to Jainism, taking pleasure in gifts of food, shelter, medicine and learning, pure in Jain faith, kind to the blessed, having

66. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 54 (67). 67. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 68 (159).

her head purified by the fragrant water of Jina." Her Guru was Prabhācandra Siddhānta Deva, who was well-versed in the scriptures (*siddhānta-śiromaṇi*), renowned for his learning and penance. On Monday the 5th day of the bright half of the month of Caitra in Śaka year 1050 (1131 A. D.) Śāntalādevi ended her life at the holy place Shivagangā and went to *svarga*.[68]

Though the inscription throws no light as to why Śāntalādevi went to Shivagaṅga, the fact has been accepted by B. A. Saletore who says "Queen Śāntalādevi's work to promote the cause of the Jina dharma was lasting.. True to the instruction of Jina dharma, she died by the orthodox manner of Sallekhanā in 1131 A. D. at the holy place of Shivagaṅgā (thirty miles to the north-west of Bangalore)"[69] in Tumkur District in the Karnataka State. It does not appear that Shivagaṅgā had the present Vīraśaiva associations then.

The same inscription also refers to the death of Mācikabbe, the mother of Śāntalādevi. On hearing that the queen had attained godhood, she went over to Beḷgoḷa and observed severe penance by adopting the vow of Sallekhanā. The description of her condition is very revealing: "With eyes half-closed, repeating the five words (i. e. *ṇamokāra mantra*), glorious with meditation on Jinendra, magnanimous in parting from relatives, absorbed in the vow of *saṃnyāsi*, fasting for one month, Mācikabbe herself attained godhood by means of her penance in the presence of all the blessed" (*sakala Bhavyara sannidhiyoḷ*). This is what Dr. Saletore states: "'The queen has attained the state of gods; I cannot remain behind,' thus saying her mother Mācikabbe, coming to Beḷgoḷa, adopted severe *saṃnyāsana* and renouncing the world, died. The half closed eyes, the repetition of five expressions, the method of meditating on Jinendra, the dignity of taking leave of relatives, indicating *saṃnyāsana*, Mācikabbe fasting cheerfully for one month, easily attained the state of gods by *samādhi*

68. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 53. (143) 69. *Medieval Jainism*, p. 166.

in the presence of all the blessed, among whom were Prabhācandra Siddhānta Deva, Vardhamānadeva and Ravicandradeva."[70]

The inscription describes fully the descent of Mācikabbe's family and concludes by referring to gifts of lands and gold made by Śāntalādevi to the Ācaryās with the permission of her husband.

Reference has been made already to Gaṅga Rāja who was the famous minister of Viṣṇuvardhana. He had an elder brother by name Bomma. Bomma had a son by name Echa who also became a *daṇḍādhīśa* (general). Echi Rāja built many Jain temples in Kopaṇā (i. e. Koppal) and other holy places including the one at Belgoḷa. The inscription carved on the *siṁha pīṭha* (seat) of Nemīśvara in the Cāmuṇḍarāyana Temple states that the temple was built by Echana Rāja. The temple was "a joy to the three worlds" (1135 A. D.).[71] He was the friend of the learned and the good. The wall-paintings (*citra-bhittiyiṁ*) in the temple are such as would please the minds of the onlookers. He became famous in promoting the Jaina religion and lived many years. Afterwards he took the vow of *saṃnyāsana* and became the resident of the world of gods after quitting his body as per directions (1135 A. D.)[72] (*Baḷika saṃnyāsana vidhiyim śarīram biṭṭu suraloka nivāsiyādaṁ*). It is further stated that his younger brother Boppadeva set up the memorial to the East of Aregallu Basti at Jinanātha purā. He aslo made a gift of lands yielding ten *khaṇḍugās* of paddy at Gaṅgasamudra, constructed a small tank to the east of *Basti* (temple) and gifted the lands of the Bekka tank for maintenance of the temple etc. to Mādhavacandra Deva, the disciple of Śubhacandra Siddhānta Deva. The inscription was got engraved by the wife of Echi Rāja, by name Echikappe, the lay disciple of Śubhacandra Siddhānta Deva and her mother-in-law Bhāgamabbe.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 166–167.
71. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. II, Ins. 66 (120).
72. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 144 (384).

Bala Deva was another *daṇḍanāyaka*. He had a son by name Singamayya whose wife was Siriya Devī. This inscription of A. D. 1139 records the death of Singamayya who had full faith at the feet of Jina, was very popular with all his relatives, and devoted to the Munis. He had become famous for his generosity. When his end was near, he adopted the vow at the feet of the great Jina, meditated upon the expressions (i. e. the five *ṇamokāra mantras*), destroyed all kinds of attachments and passion, became deeply engrossed in the meditation of the blessed and went to the home of Indra. This memorial was put up in the Maṇṭapa to the North of Pārśvatīrthara Ḍoṇe by his wife Siriya Devi, the lay disciple of Śrī Prabhācandra Siddānta Deva in the Śaka year 1061 on the 12th day of the bright half of Kārtika.[73]

Śrī Prabhācandra Deva seems to have had a large number of disciples. Bala Deva *daṇḍanāyaka* was one of them. He was unequalled in firmness, glory, goodness and generosity. He was a Rāma in battle, a Bhīma in daring, a modern Śreyāṁsa in making liberal gifts, skilled in the *Anuprekṣās* of the Jain faith and protector of the Dharma. He saw that his end was near and took the vow. With very great devotion at the glorious feet of Śrī Jina, contemplating upon the five expressions (i. e. *Ṇamokāra mantra*) with joy, cutting off all attachments and destroying all the evil passions and in the presence of his Guru, Baladeva attained the state of the immortals (*amara gatiyam paḍedaṁ*). His mother Nāgiyakka and his sister Eciyakka erected the memorial - a reading hall - and made a gift of it to Prabhācandra Deva (1139 A. D.)[74]

There is yet another instance of a lady taking the vow of Sallekhanā and reaching the world of gods as recorded in the inscription which is located in the *maṇṭapa* to the right of Yaraḍakaṭṭe temple. In the *Śaka* year 1044 (1142 A. D.) Lakṣmiāmbike or Lakkavve, the wife of Gaṅga Rāja took the vow of *Saṃnyāsa*. She was the lay disciple of *Ś*ubhacandra

73. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 52 (142). 74. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 51 (141).

Siddānta Deva of the *Śrī* Mūla Saṅgha. She had won the hearts of people by her devotion. She was unequalled in beauty, in compassion and devout attachment to religion. She was generous in the distribution of the four kinds of gifts viz. food, shelter, medicine and learning (*śāstradāna*). After adopting *saṃnyāsa*, she went into deep meditation and reached the world of gods. On erecting the memorial to his wife, Gaṅga Rāja performed great *pūjās* and distributed generous charities in commemoration of that event. It may be recalled that her mother-in-law had adopted the vow of Sallekhanā. This only shows that entire family was deeply devoted to the Jaina religion and followed in practice all its best principles.[75]

There is an inscription which refers to Jagadekamalla-Deva, the ornament of the Cālukya line. Then follows a detailed description of Mudde Gowda who took the vow of Sallekhanā. He was the disciple of Māṇikyasena Paṇḍitadeva under whose supervision he observed the vow and earned infinite merit (1143 A. D.).[76]

Even though there is a lengthy inscription in praise of the Tīrthaṅkaras Nābhey and Mahāvīra, the Ācāryas like Kundakunda and other, it states that Meghacandratraividya was the *guru* of Prabhācandra Siddhānta Deva who was "a full moon to the ocean of religious observances and 'free from *śalyas*." He was a joy to the learned and faultless in every respect. He was the master of three jewels and had purified himself by his knowledge of the *āgamas*. He was a patron of learning and a colleague of Vīranandi Saiddhāntika. He was comparable to the Gaṇadharas in learning and purity of conduct. The account of his death by Sallekhanā is very brief. It merely states that the senior-most disciple of Meghacandra Deva well-versed in the lores went to heaven. There is also mention of the death of Mācikabbe, the mother of Śāntalā Devi, praising Jina in her heart. Apart from these

75. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 48 (128).

76. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 125.

two facts, the inscription has the added importance of giving details of the famous Ācāryas (1145 A. D.).[77]

It appears from the inscription (1160 A. D.), a temple was built for Śrī Pārśva at Heggere in Tumkur District by Govi Deva, the chieftain, in memory of his wife Mahādevi-Nāyakiti who was the lay disciple of Candrayāna-deva of Kundakunda line On the second stone at the place there is an inscription stating that Meghacandra-bhaṭṭāraka-deva, the disciple of Māṇikyanandi-siddhānta-deva of the Kundakunda line, in the *Śaka* year 1085 Śubhanāma-saṁvatsara, 10th day of the bright half of the month of Āṣāḍha, Wednesday, adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana* according to rites and attained salvation.[78]

Devakīrti Paṇḍita Deva was a very great learned muni. He was well-versed in logic and poetry. He was victorious in exposing the weaknesses of other faiths. He was an expert in the exposition of the scriptures and was renowned for his purity of character. He was the chief of the learned in his time. He went to the heaven at sunrise on Wednesday, the 9th day of the bright half of Aṣāḍha in the Śaka year 1085 (1163 A. D.). The inscription is to be found in the Mahānavami Manṭapa. The epitaph at Sravaṇa Belgoḷa was erected by his three disciples Tribhuvanākyāyana, Lakkhaṇandi and Mādhavendu.[79]

At the village Karaḍāḷu in Tiptur Taluka (Dt. Tumkur), there are two inscriptions on the pillar of a Jaina temple which is in ruins. They are both of about A. D. 1174. The first one relates to the death of a woman by name Haryyāle. Before taking the oath, she advised her son Buvayā Nāyaka to abide by the religion of Jinendra and honour all those who were devoted to her god. She got the *pūja* performed and took the sandal water. In the presence of Śri Jinendra she loudly repeat-

77. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 50 (140).

78. *Ibid*, Vol. XII, Ins. 21.

79. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 39 (63).

ed the five expressions (i. e. *ṇamokāra-mantra*), conquered over all her desires and died by the *samādhi*. She entered the Indra-loka where the nymphs of the city of immortals came forth, adorned her with garlands and invited her to mount the car of glory. The next one refers to the death of one Harihara-devī who was the lay disciple of Candrayāna-deva of the Kundakundānvaya. She had, by her vows, obtained the grace of Jina and attracted the admiration of other followers. On the 8th day of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha month of Vara-jaya Saṁvatsara, she entered the world of gods after observing the vow of *samadhi* and repeating the *pañcapada* (the *ṇamokāra-mantra*) Salutation to Jineśvara and Śāntīśvara the Conqueror (*vītarāga*).[80]

In the T. Narasipur Taluka (Dt. Mysore), there is a village called Basavanapura. In one of the fields, an inscription was found by the Department of Archeology. It records that Sūri Candraprabha observed the vow of Sallekhanā and quitted his body happily and in peace in the Śaka year 1105 (1183 A. D.), Śubhakṛta Saṁvat, Tuesday, 10th day of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada early in the morning. His disciple was Ajitasena-deva. The inscription opens with the praise of Śrī Vardhamāna, the last Tīrthaṅkara. It makes mention of Samantabhadra Munīśvara and Vimalacandra-deva who defeated the Śaivas, the Pāśupatas and Buddhists in disputes. Special mention is made of Indranandi who composed Pratīkṣā Kalpa and Jvālinī Kalpa which would endure for ages.[81]

At Belagāmi (Shimoga District) in Taḷagundi Hobli of Shikarpur Taluka, there is an inscription (1186 A. D.), which refers to Padmiyakka or Padmauve, the wife of Malśeṭṭi. She adopted the vow of *samādhi* or Sallekhanā and obtained the happiness of the other world. This was in the 16th year of Yādava Cakravarti Vīra Ballāḷadeva. She has been described as pious woman of fine character, hospitable to all Jainas,

80. *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, Ins. 93-94. 81. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 105.

an embodiment of religious faith and devoted to her husband. The date is Visvāvasu Saṁvatsarada, Puṣya month, Sunday, the Makara Saṅkrānti day.[82]

In an inscription found at Cikkamāgaḍi in Shikārpur Taluka (District Shimoga) near the Śāntinātha Temple, it is stated that Śāntalā was the daughter of Sankaya Nāyaka and Muddavve. She acquired fame for her charity. She was Sītā of her times. She was devoted to Jinanātha and was the worshipper of Nayakīrti-deva Muni. She was regarded as a jewel amongst women and had reached the height of good character. She became engrossed in her meditation of Jina and reached heaven in peace and happiness.[83] Part of the inscription is erased (1190 A. D.).[85]

There is another inscription at the same place. Many relevant details cannot be deciphered. The first part states that one Biroja died and secured *sugati* on Friday, Caitra Sudha 2 of Virodhināma Saṁvatsara. There is clear mention in that very inscription about one Bommavve having adopted the vow of Sallekhanā (*sannasan samādhiyaṃ*) and reached heaven on Wednesday.[84]

Somalādevi was the lay disciple of Śubhacandra Muni and she adopted the vow of Sallekhanā even before her spiritual master in about 1200 A. D. Much of the inscription is erased. She is praised as a *Jina yoginī*, very much devoted to the worship of Jinendra. She was liberal and charitable like the divine cow and had become famous for her perfect devotion. With the permission of her Guru, she adopted the vow at the Śāntīśvara temple and performed it according to the Jaina rites with perfect right faith (*samyaktvadiṁ*) and joy. She attained the state of godhood.[85]

The inscription at Arsikere Taluka (Dt. Hassan) is all worn out. It appears that there was one Devanandi who was a disciple of some *bhaṭṭāraka*. His disciple Epa (further portion

82. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 148.
83. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 200.
84. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 201.
85. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 232.

of the name is worn out) kept the vow and expired.[86] Another inscription at the same place simply states that Mahendrakīrti Siddhānta-bhaṭāra expired.[87] There is one more incomplete inscription. It states that Pesavi-kanti was a female disciple of Devasena-siddānta-bhaṭāra of Nallur. (She observed the vow) for 70 (days) and expired. No dates are mentioned against any of them.[88]

In Channapaṭna Taluka (Dt. Mandya) there is an inscription of A. D. 1200 which records that one Dore who was very ill took the vow of *Saṃnyāsana* and obtained the better world by standing penance.[89]

In Gubbi Taluka, at a village by name Niṭṭur (Dt. Tumkur) there is the temple of Ādīśvara. On a stone in the Northern wall of this temple, there is a record (1200 A. D.) of the death of Maḷiyakka who was the lay disciple of Bālacandra-paṇḍita-deva who was the disciple of Abhayacandra-saidhāntika cakravarti of the Kundakundānvaya line. She has great faith in the Jaina religion and observed the vows. She died by *saṃnyasana*. Her daughter-in-law Caudiyakka seems to have died at about that time.[90]

There is another instance of a woman by name Malla gauḍi who obtained salvation by observing the vow. She was a woman of pious character and breathed her last when she was in deep meditation of Lord Jina (*Jina-smaraṇadindaṃ gatajīvite*). Her Guru was Sakalacandra Muni who was very well-read in the Jaina scriptures and was a well-wisher of all his followers. The event is recorded as having taken place on the 21st day of Vīradeva Ballāḷa year Prajāpati Saṁvatsara, on Sunday the seventh day of the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa (about 1211 A. D.).[91]

It is unfortunate that the name of the person who observed the vow of Sallekhanā cannot be deciphered as part of

86. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 28.
87. *Ibid*, Vol. V, Ins. 25.
88. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 24.
89. *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, Ins. 154.
90. *Ibid.*, Vol. XII, Ins. 5.
91. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 97.

the inscription is worn out. The name of his father was Bālacandradeva who was the disciple of Mahāmaṇḍalācārya Rāja Guru Nemicandra-paṇḍita-deva who illuminated the world by his matchless fame and study of the *āgamas* of supreme Jina. The wife of the deceased was Kaḷabbe. She was equal to Sītā, Rukmiṇi and Rati. She attained *samādhi* by the rite of Sallekhanā 1213 A. D."[92]

Very few details are available about the death of Vidyādhara Būcidevarasa who expired in the Śaka year 1138 (1216 A. D.) on Jyeṣṭha Śuddha Paurṇimā. He was the army-chaplain of the Rāya (king). The other portions are not visible as they are worn out.[93]

On a stone within the enclosure of the Padmāvati temple at Humcha there is an inscription which states that Maḷe Māche Gāuṇḍa sent for all the people after coming to know that his own life was coming to an end. He adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana*, observed it according to all rites and went to heaven on Sunday the 13th day of the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa."[94]

Baṇḍaḷike in Shikarpur Taluka seems to have been a Jaina centre as there was a Jaina Maṭha. An inscription found to the left of the temple of Śāntinātha was erected by Bharateśvara on behalf of the Maṭha recording the death by Sallekhanā of Śubhacandra-deva, the disciple of Lalitakīrti Muni belonging to the Mūla-sangha of the Krānūrgaṇa and Tiṁtriṇika-gaccha. Śubhacandra had abandoned all company. He took the permission of his Guru and adopted the vow. He was deeply engrossed in the repetition of the *Pañcapada* (i. e. the five ṇamokāra mantras). He was firm in his meditation and departed to the abode of gods by observing the *saṁnyasana* on Monday, the fourth day of the bright half of the month of Caitra of the Śrīmukha year (1213 A. D.).[95]

92. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 389
93. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, Ins. 76.
94. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 59.
95. *Ibid.*, Vol. VII, Ins. 226.

Payiśetti, son of Nāgiśetti, was a pious Jaina, known as *Samyaktva Cūḍāmaṇi* (crest jewel of Right Faith in Jainism) and a disciple of Abhinava Panditācārya. The latter belonged to the lineage of Kundakunda. Pāyiśetti meditated upon the feet of Jineśvara and obtained the blessed state by *samādhi* (1311 A D.).[96]

There is a similar record which is partly effaced about the son of Somaya who died by *saṁnyāsana* on Wednesday, the 5th day of the bright half of *Puṣya* month, Śaka Year 1170 (1247 A. D.).[97]

On the 5th stone is recorded the death by Sallekhanā rites of Soyi-Devi and her departure to heaven. She was the lay disciple of Bālacandra Deva and was endowed with character, all virtues and adept in vows. Her father was Mādhava and mother was Kāmāmbika. There was none to equal Bālacandra-deva in poetry, recitation, discussion and oratory (1245 A. D.)[98]

There is a simple memorial to Abhaya(candra), the disciple of Municandra Maladhāri-deva. He died by *samādhi* and went to heaven (1248 A. D.).[99] In the same enclosure to the temple of Padmāvatī, there is another stone which records the death of Pārśva Śenabova, the beloved son of Brahmayya Śenabova. He died on the 10th day of the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa in Śaka year 1172 (1248 A. D.).[100]

This is an unusual epitaph which refers to the Sallekhanā deaths of Puṣpaśenadeva and Akalaṅkadeva. It is in two parts: the first in prose and the second in verse. The event took place in Śaka year 1178 Ānanda Saṁvatsara, on Tuesday the 4th day of the dark half of the month Puṣya; both the *munis* went to heaven after observing the vow of *saṃnyāsana* according to rites. They had given up even water. They were endowed with all virtues and character. They had been spending their time in reading scriptures, meditation, complete

96. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 125.
97. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 50.
98. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 53.
99. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 53.
100. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 56.

silence and contemplation. They had acquired knowledge and made full progress. They were free from falsehood, delusion and desire; they had full control over their mind, body and speech. They were the great Ācāryas and Royal preceptors. Contemplating with concentration on the nature of Paramātma (supreme spirit) and repeating the *pañcapadas* which are full sources of happiness and joy, Puṣpasena Muni gained salvation. The management of the Panchabasadi was handed over to Guṇaśena Siddhānta. The pure Akalaṇka-vrati expired while he had fixed his mind steadfastly on the essence of supreme Jina and with perfect confidence. He was a distinguished writer of Jaina scriptures and propagator of the religion. He was learned in the doctrines of all faiths. Puṣpasena-yati was ever generous. He was the disciple of Vādirāja-muni who had mastered both logic and grammar with his unbounded wisdom. The epitaph was made by Sayoja, the son of Santoja. This is on a stone in the temple of Pārśvanātha (1255 A. D.)[1]

In Belur Taluka (Dist. Hassan) there is an inscription which records the Sallekhanā of Bālacandra Paṇḍitadeva. Nemicandra-baṭṭāraka-deva and Abhayacandra-siddhānta-cakravarti were respectively his *dīkṣā-guru* and *śruta-guru*. Bālacandra-paṇḍita-deva was famous for his teachings and penance. He asked for the forgiveness of all people of the four castes and announced that he would adopt *saṃnyāsana*. He seated himself in *palyaṅkāsana* and praised the *pañca-parameṣṭhis* in such a way that he evoked the admiration of all people of his own and other sects. The Jainas of the royal city of Dorasamudra performed all the ceremonies suitable for the occasion, made images of their own guru and of *pañca-parameṣṭhis* and set them up for his merit and fame. This is near the Ādinātheśvara temple at Bastihaḷḷi of Belūr Hobli. The vow was accomplished on Wednesday noon, the 12th day of Bhādrapada bright half, Bhāva Saṁvatsara Śaka year 1197 (1275) A. D.).[2] Rich tributes are paid to this ascetic for his expert knowledge

1. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 44.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 131.

in logic and in expounding the principles of Anuprekṣā by illustrations and proof.[3]

The village Bastihalli in which are found the three temple of Ādinātha, Śāntinātha and Pārśvanātha was part of Dorasamudra. There are important inscriptions in these temples. Dr. Saletore says, " The Jaina citizens of Dorasamudra witnessed a remarkable spectable in A. D. 1274. Bālacandra Panditadeva of the Desīya Gaṇa, .. was a learned and austere *guru* .. Having performed all the rites of *saṁnyasana* he suffered perfect entombment ..Five years later (A. D. 1279) another great Jaina *guru* died amidst equally orthodox circumstances. This was Abhayacandra Siddhāntadeva.. who was the Śruta guru of Bālacandra Paṇḍitadeva..And twenty years after his death, the pious Jaina citizens of Dorasamudra once again lost an equally remarkable Jaina teacher. He was Rāmacandra Maladhāri-deva, the senior disciple of Bālachandra Paṇḍitadeva "[4]

The first epitaph in the Śantinātha temple at Bastihalli records the Sallekhanā of Abhayacandra-siddhānta-cakravarti who was the disciple of Samudāyada-Māghanandi-bhaṭṭāraka. He was well-versed in prosody, logic, vocabulary, grammar, philosophy and rhetoric and refuted the false doctrines. On the 9th day of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa of *Śaka* year 1202 (1279 A. D.) he felt that he was nearing his death. He foresook all food without fear and adopted the vow. He reached the abode of gods. The citizens of Dorasamudra raised a high monument for him.[5]

The second epitaph in the same temple records the death of Rāmacandra Maladhāri-deva who was the senior disciple of Bālacandra-paṇḍita-deva. On the afternoon of Thursday, 3rd day of the dark half of the month of Caitra, Sarvari Saṁvatsara, Śaka year 1222 (1300 A, D.), he informed all the people of the four castes that he would adopt *saṃnyāsana.* He performed all rites of *saṃnyāsana,* meditated on the

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 132. 4. *Medieval Jainism*, pp. 209–213.
5. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*, Vol. V, Ins. 133.

pañca-parameṣṭhis and went to heaven. The greatness of his religious conduct has been described thus : "while walking, he did not swing his arms, he did not walk without looking before him to the length of a yoke, he never touched women and gold, he never spoke rough words, he was ever alert night and day, never uttered boastful words and never fell into the mesh of ignorance." The Jainas of the royal city of Dorasamudra made his image and of the *pañca parameṣṭhis.*[6]

Dorasamudra was the famous capital of Hoysala rulers and it was a stronghold of Jainas. It was during the reign of Ballāḷa II that a Jaina merchant by name Nemiśeṭṭi died adopting the vow of Sallekhanā. His guru was Nayakīrti who figures in many of the Hoysaḷa records. He was "an emperor of philosophy" and was superior to many other Gurus.[7]

There are some inscriptions near the Jaina temple at Hire-Āvali in Sorab Taluka of Shimoga District. In the 23rd year of the reign of Yādava Nārayaṇa, Prauḍha Pratāpa Cakravarti Rāmacandra, Āvali Kalagauḍā expired by *saṃnyāsana* and reached salvation. He was the lay disciple of Devanandideva of the Śrī-Mūla Saṅgha of Kundakunda. Unfortunately, the name of the lay disciple of Siddhāntadeva who died by adopting the vow of *saṃnyāsana* is erased. The event took place in 1295 A. D. during the reign of Abhinava Bukka Rāya.[8]

There is another record at the same place relating to the death of Choḷayā by Sallekhanā during the reign of Rāmadeva on the 4th day of the bright half of Bhādrapada Vikṛti Saṁvatsara (1290 A. D.). This Choḷaya was the disciple of Maladhāri-deva.[9] The next stone records the death of Kallagauḍa by Sallekhanā and his attainment of the heavenly abode on the 13th day of the dark half of Bhādrapada of Durmukhi Saṃvatsara (1296 A. D.). This was during the reign of Koṭi Nāyaka who was the *maṇḍaḷika.* Kallagauḍa was the disciple

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 134.
7. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, Ins. 134.
8. *Ibid.*; Vol. VIII, Ins 101.
9. *Ibid*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 113.

of Rāmacandra-Maladhārideva of Śrī Mūla Saṅgha, Desi-gaṇa.[10] There is an epitaph which refers to the Sallekhanā of Śiriyamma Gauḍi. She was the wife of Siriyamma Gauḍa. This was during the period of Koṭi Nāyaka in 1299 A. D. She was the disciple of Guṇanandi Bhaṭṭāraka, of Mūla Saṅgh, Deśi-gaṇa of Kundakunda. She attained the heavenly state.[11]

Ravandūr is a village in Hunsur Taluka (Dt. Mysore). There is a Jaina temple. In the temple, there is an inscription which records that Śrutakīrti-deva attained salvation on Sunday, 8th day of the dark half of the month of second Bhādrapada, Rudhirogāri Saṁvat Śaka year 1306 (1384 A. D.). He was the chief disciple of Prabhendu and the disciple of Śruta-muni. His disciple Ādideva-muni and the local Jainas set up his image and that of the Tīrthaṅkara Sumati. They also repaired the temple.[12]

In the Śaka year 1235 on Tuesday, the 14th day of the dark half of the month of Srāvaṇa, the great Muni Śubhacandra departed to the city of immortals freeing himself from the trammels of his body (1313 A. D.). He has been described as being well-versed in spiritualism, with a wholly detached mind, under the dominating influence of the Jaina religion; he had conquered all the passions. Freed from the results of the *ārta* and *raudra* meditations, with *śubha-citta*, he left his body while he was meditating upon the *pañcanamaskāra* (*Namokāra mantra*). It is stated that the memorial was erected by his disciple Padmanandi Paṇḍita Deva in the Mahānavami Maṇṭapa. The inscription gives the succession of Gurus in the Kundakunda lineage of Pustakagaccha of the Deśi-gaṇa of *Mūla-saṅgha* in this order : Meghacandra-Traividya, Umānandi, Anantakīrti-muni, Śubhacandra-muni.[13]

An epitaph similarly worded refers to the death of Kāmagauḍa who was the son of Gopa-gauḍa and the disciple of

10. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 114.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 122.
12. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 495.
13. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 123.

Rāmacandra-Maladhāri. This was during the reign of Hari-yappa Voḍeyara (1352 A. D.).[14]

Candrakīrti Vratīndra attained the divine state of Salvation on the 5th day of the month of Āśvina in Śaka year 1278 (1356 A. D.) after cutting off all ties and praising the supreme *parameṣṭhis*. The same inscription refers to Perumālu mahiśa, the son of Māchirāje and Mālambike, as having attained salvation in the Śaka year 1274 (1352 A. D.). His elder brother's wife Allaṁbe attained the divine state in Śaka year 1290 (1368 A. D.). While Perumāḷa Devarasa and Permmi-Devarasa were ruling the kingdom in peace in Hullanahaḷḷi, they caused to be erected for their benefit in this world and in the next, the lofty Caityālaya called Trijagan-maṅgalaṁ and installed the image of god Māṇikya-deva. They repaired other temples and made land grants.[15]

On Friday, the 5th day of the dark half of the month of Āśvina Plavanganāma Saṁvatsara (1367 A. D.), Gorava Gauḍa who was the disciple of Virasena-deva adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana* and died repeating the *pañca-namaskāra*. The devotee who died was a votary of *Ratnatraya* (three jewels), was the son of Avaliya Becha-Gaunḍan and the younger brother of Canda Gaunḍan. He went to heaven by observing the vow of *saṃnyāsana* (*saṃnyāsana samādhi vidhiyiṁ svarga prāptiyādanu*). He was the protector of men of learning and always engaged in charity (1366 A. D.).[16] About 29 years later Kāmi-gaunḍi who was the niece of Bechigaunḍan adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana* and went to heaven. Her Guru was Siddhānti-yatīśa, the royal preceptor. She was the wife of Kāma Rāmaṇṇa and was noted for her chastity. She attained salvation (*nākamaṃ nere paḍedaḷ*). This was during the reign of Hari-hara Rāya, on Wednesday, 11th day of the dark half of the month of Phālguna of Bhava Saṁvatsara (1395 A. D.).[17] Another inscription records that one Malagounḍa, the son of Siriyama

14. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 41 (65).
15. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 110.
16. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 125.
17. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 109.

Gauḍa and the grandson of Kāma Gauḍa, died after adopting the vow of *saṃnyasana* and attained salvation on the date of coronation of Hariyappa Vodeyar in Śaka year 1276 (1354 A. D.), Vijaya Saṁvatsara, 3rd day of the dark half of the month of Puṣya. It is also mentioned that his wife Chennakka attained salvation by *sahagamana* (*satī*).[18]

At Echiganahalli of Nanjangud Taluka, there is a temple dedicted to Neminātha Tīrthaṅkara. To the North of the temple near the river, an epitaph was erected by Māṇika Deva to commemorate the death of his Guru Meghacandra Deva who was an epitome of all virtues and an embodiment of the Jaina faith. There is no express mention that he adopted the vow of Sallekhanā. It is stated that he attained *mukti* (*muktige sandaru*) in the Śaka year 1293 (1371 A. D.). Pārśva-deva and Bāhubali-deva are praised as Munis who knew every branch of knowledge and science, respected by all kings and had defeated many disputants.[19]

Rāṁpur Hobli in Nanjangud Taluka seems to have had been a Jaina centre as there are many inscriptions. There seem to have been some Jain temples also. Hullahaḷḷi is a village in that Hobli. A stone inscription found to the North of the main entrance to the Varadarajasvāmi temple states that numerous promoters of the Jaina faith were born in the *Mūla-Saṅgha, Deśīya-gaṇa*, the Kundakundānvaya and Ingaleśvara line. The incription is very much effaced and only a part of it is readable. In the Śaka year 1294 (1372 A. D.), on Saturday, the bright half of the Āṣāḍha pratipada, Śrutamuni abandoned all things of this world, spent all his time in meditating upon the Parameṣṭhis with devotion and attained the exalted state of salvation.[20]

The 15th stone at Hire-Avali in Sorab Taluka records the death of Ramagauḍa, the son of Canda-gauḍa of Āvaliya, by Sallekhanā repeating the *pañcanamaskāra.* He was the

18. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 102.
19. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 104.
20. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 43.

disciple of Rāmacandra Maladhāri-deva. The event took place on the 13th day of the bright half of Phālguṇa, Pramāthi-Saṁvatsara 1293 (1374 A. D.) during the reign of Bukka Rāya. There are the names of the members of the family who raised the epitaph.[21]

There is one sentence (1375 A. D.) which merely wishes great auspicious fortune to Hemacandra Kīrti Deva. Similarly, there is a short tribute paid to Padmanandi Deva, the disciple of Traividya Deva, who went to the heaven on Monday, the first day of the bright half of Caitra in *Naḷa* Saṁvatsara (1376 A. D.).[22]

The sixth stone at Hire-Āvali refers to the death of Bechigauḍa, the son of Candagauḍa. He was the disciple of Rāmacandra Maladhāri and died repeating the *pañcanamaskāra mantra* in Śaka year 1298 (1376 A. D.) Āśvina Sudha 12. This was during the reign of Bukka Rāya. It is further recorded that the wife of Bechigauḍa by name Muddigauṇḍi ascended the pyre of her husband and died.[23]

Ekamati-yabbe was the daughter of Muda-Gauḍa who was the disciple of Vīrasena-Deva. She died according to the rites of *samadhi*, repeating the *pañcanamaskara* on the full moon day of the month of Jyeṣṭha, Rudhirodgāri Saṁvatsara (1383 A. D.).[24]

The sixteenth stone at Hire-Āvali refers to the period of the reign of Harihara Rāya, the son of Bukka Rāya. Munibhadra Svāmi was the master of all religious vows and virtues. His disciple Kāmagauḍa, was the leader of Jiddulige Nāḍu. He was a devout follower in the path of Jina, extending all the four kinds of charities and a devout follower of the three jewels (*ratnatrayadhārakanum*). His son Hiriya Candappa who was the light of the family, adopted the vow of *saṃnyasana* and went to heaven after observing it according to rites. This

21. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 64.
22. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 115.
23. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 112 (272).
24. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 114.

was in Śaka year 1311 (1389 A. D.) Śukla Saṁvatsara, 14th day of the dark half of Kārtīka.[25] Kalagowda, the son of Gopagowda and the disciple of Śubhacandra-deva died by *samādhi* and attained heavenly abode on Thursday, 13th day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha Angirasa Saṁvatsara (1392 A. D.).[26]

The fifth stone near the temple Hire-Āvali records that during the reign of Harihara Rāya, Canda Gauṇḍi, the wife of Canda Gauṇḍa who was the leader of the Jiddulige Nāḍu adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana* and attained salvation after observing it according to rites. This was on the 12th day of the month of Asādha, bright half, Śaka year 1321 (1398 A. D.). She worshipped at the feet of Pārśva Jina and meditated near the lotus feet of Vijayakīrti. She happily reached the world of Indra.[27]

The third stone in the enclosure to the Padmāvatī temple at Humcha (District Shimoga), records that Pāyaṇṇa of Poṁbucha, the son of Mallappa adopted the vow of Sallekhanā, went into meditation, left the body and reached the heaven on the 3rd day in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa in Śaka year 1321 (1398 A. D.).[28]

Great tributes have been paid to Paṇḍita who ascended to the seat of gods on Friday, the 14th day of Māgha in the Śaka year 1320 (1398 A. D.), peacefully praising the feet of Jinendra and making a profound exposition of knowledge. He had secured the great estimation of all those who had acquired full knowledge of the supreme path. He died in the presence of Abhinava Paṇḍita Deva Sūri who was his disciple and whom he had led into his own path of penance. This inscription is unique in that it opens with the praise of all the twenty four Tīrthaṅkaras, the Gaṇadharas and the Śruta Kevalins. Reference is made to "*yatīndra Kundakunda*" the esteemed Umāsvāti "the *yatīśa*" who had composed the *Tattvārtha Sūtra* which is a guide to those who want to follow the path of liberation.

25. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 106.
26. *Ibid*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 112.
27. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 116.
28. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 111.

Glowing tributes are paid to Samantabhadra, Sivakoṭi Sūri, Deva Nandi, Pūjyapāda, Bhaṭṭākalaṅka, Guṇasena Sūri, Puṣpadanta, Bhūtabali, Arhatbali and numerous others who had already distinguished themselves for their learning and penance. This *Śāsana* is said to have been composed by Arhaddāsa as a mark of his devotion to his Guru. The inscription is located in the Siddhara Basti to the North.[29]

In the Eastern corner of the Akkana Basti, Sravaṇabeḷgoḷa there is a short inscription recording that Harihara Rāya attained peace on Monday, the 10th day of the dark half of Bhādrapada of the Tāraṇa Saṁvatsara (1404 A. D.).[30]

At Hire-Āvali is found the 17th stone pertaining to the reign of Harihara Rāya. In the Śaka Saṁvatsara Svabhānu 1325 (1403 A. D.) on the 7th day of Bhādrapada, Friday, Bommigauṇḍi, the wife of Bechi Gaunḍa, adopted the vow of *saṃnyāsana*, observed it according to the rites, quitted the heavy load of the body here and secured salvation. The verse states that she had abandoned all her family and was unequalled in virtues. She was meditating on Jina and repeating the *pañcanamaskāra* in her mind. Her Guru was Māracandra-Maladhāri Deva.[31] The next epitaph refers to the reign of Deva Rāya. During his regime, Maduka Gauḍa, the good son of Bechi Gauḍa went to heaven after following the rites of *samādhi*. This event took place on the bright half of the month of Phālguṇa, Śārvari Saṁvatsara, Śaka year 1343 (1421 A. D.).[32] He was the disciple of Munibhadra Svāmi. The next inscription contains a number of verses in praise of Gopa Gauḍa who adopted the vow and attained heaven on Thursday, the 10th day of the dark half of the month of Caitra, Śaka year 1339 (1420 A. D.). His father was Rāma Gauḍa and was the favourite disciple of Munibhadra Svāmi. Gopa Gauḍa is described as having been charitable and having repaired many Jaina temples. He had become famous in the Jiddulige area

29. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 105.
30. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 51.
31. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 105 (254).
32. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 126 (329).

for his goodness and generosity.[33] The 20th stone also refers to the reign of Deva Rāya Voḍeyaru and records the death of Bhairava Gauḍa by repeating the *pañcanamaskara* in Śaka year 1343 (1421 A. D.) Āśvīna *Bahuḷa*.[34] The verses that praise Bhairava Gauḍa are mostly erased. The next one simply records the death of Rāmi-Gauḍi, in 1396 A. D., the lay disciple of Mādhavacandra-Maladhāri. She was the wife of Rāma Gauḍa of Hire Āvaliya.[35]

The poet Manga Rāja composed the inscription located in the Siddhara Basti to the Southern side. It is difficult to say whether this Manga Rāja is the second or the third of the poets of that name in Kannada. The epitaph begins by praising the Tīrthaṅkaras and the other Ācāryas. It describes Pūjyapāda Muni as unrivalled in the science of medicine and is addressed as Jinendra Buddhi since he had acquired all knowledge. It refers to the four *saṅghas* of the Munis : Deva, Nandi, Siṁha and Sena. Then it mentions some of the famous munis that belonged to the different Saṅghas. Śruta-muni whose death is recorded here was the disciple of Siddhānta Yogi. He was worthy of his Guru in wisdom, virtues, character and learning. When Śruta-muni felt that his end was near, as he took ill while he was expounding the philosophy of Jinendra, he took the vow saying that the body was perishable and went into meditation. He kept repeating the *namokāra mantra*, concentrated on his own soul and peacefully quitted his body (*Śrutamunir ayam aṅgaṁ svam vihaya praśantaḥ*). The memorial was set up in the Śaka year 1355, Paridhāvi Saṁvatsara, 9th day of the bright half of the second Āṣāḍha (1432 A. D.).[36]

There is a brief inscription recording the death of Devarāya in the year named Kṣaya, on Tuesday, the 14th day of the dark half of second Vaiśākha. This refers to Deva Rāya II (A. D. 1419 – A. D. 1446) of the Vijayanagar

33. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 117.
34. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 118.
35. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 119.
36. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 120.

Empire. He was a great patron of Jainism and gifted the village of Varanga to the temple of Neminātha at the same place. This is located in a corner to the East of Akkanabasti at Śrvaṇabeḷgoḷa.[38]

On a rock lying to the North of Tāvare Kere (the tank of white lotuses), there is an inscription recording the death of Cāru Kīrti Paṇḍita Yati, in the Śaka year 1565 (1643 A. D.), Shobhanu Saṁvatsara at midday on the dark half of the 14th day of Puṣya, the ascetic who was an Emperor in the three lores went to the heaven when he was in meditation (*yoge svargapuraṁ jagama*).[39]

The latest inscription contained in the volume is in Kannada. It records the death of Ajita Kīrti Devaru after fasting for a month in the Bhadrabāhu Cave. He was the disciple of Śānta Kīrti Devaru who was the disciple of Ajita Kīirti Devaru belonging to the Desigaṇa of Kundakunda line. This event took place in the Śālivāhana era 1731 Śukla Saṁvatsara Wednesday, 4th day of the dark half of Bhādrapada (1809 A. D.).[40] Bhaṭṭākaḷanka, the head of Desigaṇa, lord of the stable throne in Kanakagiri, ascended to the heaven by a happy death occasioned by proper practice of the vow.[41]

Some other instances

The popularity of the practice (of Sallekhanā) is attested througout the history of Jainism. In 1172, thus died the great scholar and statesman Hemacandra, followed in a short time by his patron Kumārapāla;[42] in 1912, a monk at Ahmedabad, though in perfect health, starved himself to death by a fast of 41 days; and in the following year, a nun at Rajkot, hav-

36. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Ins. 121.
37. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 108 (258).
38. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 125 (328).
39. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 142 (362).
40. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, Ins. 72.
41. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, Ins. 146.
42. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 34.

ing previously weakened herself by austerities, died after two or three days' fast.[43]

The Kāḷaṅdi inscriptions in the former State of Sirohi (which is now in Gujarāt) record the deaths of a congregation of Jainas by fasting in Śaka year 1389 (1311 A. D.).

Sallekhanā in 1973

Another more recent instance of Sallekhanā is that of Sudharmasāgara Muni. While he was staying at Gajapanth in Mahārāṣṭra, Nasik District, which is a place of Jaina pilgrimage, for about seven months in 1973, he decided to accept the vow on 13th August 1973 owing to old age and weakness of eyesight. He gave up all solid foods and decided to take only milk and water. This was on the full moon day of the month of Śrāvaṇa. On the first day of the full moon day of the month of Bhādrapada (that is, one and half months later) he gave up milk also. He started taking water once in 2 or 3 days. On 9th September, he took water for the last time and gave up that also. He adopted the *Yama-Sallekhanā*. His peace of mind and purity went on increasing. Most of his time, he used to spend in silence: he used to be engrossed in reading scriptures and contemplation on the real nature of the Ātman. People started gathering on hearing the news of Sallekhanā.

A wonderful incident happened on 26th August 1973. When the Muniji had gone to a field a little away from the Dharmaśālā (rest-house) and was deeply engrossed in meditation as usual in a cave there, Kṣullaka Vijayakīrti mahārāja was sitting near him at about 11.30 A. M. The door of the cave was half open. A cobra measuring about 6¼ feet in length came there and sat near the Muni. A little later, it opened its hood and began to wave it most beautifully. Śrī Vijayakīrtiji who was not in contemplation observed this but started his contemplation. For about an hour, the cobra was

43. *Heart of Jainism*, p. 163.

sitting quietly. The devotees who came for the *darśana* observed this and caused no disturbance. After his meditation was over, the Muniji saw the cobra and touched it with his peacock-*piñchhi* and waved it on the cobra's head saying "O, King of serpants, your work is over and you can go." The cobra touched the ground as if in salutation and left the place quietly. On occasions, he used to deliver religious discourses and get engrossed in meditation. His peace of mind remained supreme all through. He finally expired at 1.30 P. M. on 24th September 1973 silently repeating the *pañcaṇamokāra mantra*. Death came on the 42nd day after the adoption of the vow. He died a peaceful death leaving a silent message of devotion to religion. About 15 thousand people had collected to participate in the last journey.[44]

Another instance of Sallekhanā occured on 21st September 1973 about which the details are not full. Śrī Bhadrabāhu Muni-mahārāja was very ill at Bārāmati where he was spending his four months of the rainy season. He adopted the vow of Sallekhanā on 17th September 1973 in the presence of Śreyāṅsasāgara Muni-mahārāja. Śrī Bhadrabāhu Muni breathed his last quietly at the end of four days. The dead body was taken in procession which was attended by about 25 thousand people.[45]

A few comments on some of the volumes of *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā* are essential to know that Jainism was popular in Karnatak.

Coorga is a District in the Karnataka State. B. Lewis Rice published 22 inscriptions in 1886 in the series of *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā*. The Institute of Kannada Studies, University of Mysore has published in 1972 a revised edition* including some more inscriptions. Jainism seems to have spread early in this District as many monks seem to have moved to the villages

44. *Sanmati*, Oct., 1973. 45. *Sanmati*, Oct., 1973.

* The references in this book for inscriptions are to this latest edition of 1972.

from Śravaṇabeḷgoḷā. This territory was ruled over by the Caṅgaḷvās from the 10th to the 17th century. They were originally Jainas, and so we find a large number of temples in different parts of the district. Naturally many Jaina Ācāryas seem to have flourished here and spread the gospel of Jainism. Though there are some inscriptions relating to the constructions of Jain temples and of grants made to them, I am confining myself only to such of them as refer to the observance of the vow of Sallekhanā. It may be mentioned that Guṇasenapaṇḍitadeva was mainly responsible for inspiring the Caṅgāḷva Chiefs to acts of charity and religion.

In his introduction to *Epigraphia Carṇāṭica*, Vol. II, Śrī R. Narasimhachar has stated that the epitaphs range from about 600 to 1809. The term Sallekhanā is used only in three inscriptions (Nos. 118, 258 and 389), while in several others the words *samādhi* and *saṃnyāsana* occur as its synonyms. The period of fast varied from one month to three days. Of the eighty epitaphs, 64 commemorate the death of men, mostly monks, and 16 of them of women, mostly nuns. No. 1 is important historically as it mentions the last Tīrthaṅkara and his immediate disciples, the *gaṇadharas*. Bhadrabāhusvāmi by virtue of his *avadhijñāna*, the power of knowing the past, present and future, foretold in Ujjaini a period of twelve years of famine, and the entire *saṅgha* set forth from the North to the South. He has referred to the difference of opinion amongst scholars like Drs. Leumann and Fleet as to whether the inscription contains two different parts on the supposition that there were two different persons bearing the name of Bhadrabāhu. Narasimhachar holds the view that such a view cannot be accepted in view of the fact that the inscription is not a synchronous record and that it was engraved long after the death of Prabhācandra who was a member of the Saṅgha that migrated to the South. This is supported from the last sentence of the inscription that in course of time about seven hundred ascetics accomplished *samādhi* and it makes that fact clear. There can be little doubt from the

contents of the inscription that Bhadrabāhu referred to must be Śrutakevali Bhadrabāhu whose lineage is given. This is consistent with Jaina tradition and literature.

Some of the ascetics were important Ācāryas. Ariṣṭanemi mentioned in No. 11 was an Ācārya who died on the Kaṭavapra Hill in the presence of Dindika, probably a king.

Other Munis and Ācāryas whose Sallekhanā deaths are recorded in these inscriptions are Baladeva Muni (No. 2), Guṇasena, Panappa Bhaṭṭāra, Sarvajña Bhaṭṭāra of Vegur, Akṣayakīrti of Southern Madura who was bitten by a snake, Guṇadeva-sūri, Baladeva *guravaḍigaḷ*, who was a disciple of Dharmasena of Velmād of Kittūr; Ugrasena, disciple of Paṭṭini Guruvāḍigal of Malenur; Māsenarṣi, Śāntisena Muni who gave impetus to the Jaina faith, Singanandi, Nāgasena, disciple of Ṛṣabhasena, Baladevācārya, Candradevācārya, renowned in the Nāḍi Kingdom, Puṣpanandi, Nandisenamuni, Vītaśoka Bhaṭṭāra of Koḷattūra Saṅgha, Indranandi Ācārya, Puṣpasena Ācārya of Navilūr Saṅgha, Śrīdeva Ācārya, Vṛṣabhanandi, desciple of Muniācārya of Navilūr Saṅgha, and Meghanandimuni of the same Saṅgha.

Amongst the nuns whose deaths are noted are: Dhannakuṭṭarevi-guravi, Jumbu nāygīr, Nāgamati Ganṭiyār female disciple of Muni Guruvādiga of Chittūr in Aḍeyaṇāre Nāḍu, Sasimati Ganṭiyār, Rājamati Ganṭiyār of Aji-gaṇa of Navilūr Saṅgha, Āryā of Mayūragrāma-Saṅgha, that is, Navilūr Saṅgha, Guṇamati avvegaḷ of Navilūr Saṅgha, Prabhāvati and Demitamati of the same Saṅgha.

Among the Śrāvakas and Śravikis who died by observing Sallekhanā, mention may be made of the following: Vaijabbe daughter of Beṭṭadeva, Sayibbe-kanṭiyār, female disciple of Kumāranandi Bhaṭṭāra, Poḷḷabbe kanṭiyār, Pāyiseṭṭi son of Nāgaseṭṭi, lay disciple of Abhinava Paṇḍitācārya, Dharmabhūṣaṇa, Hemacandrakīrti, disciple of Śāntikīrti, Malliṣeṇa, disciple of Lakṣmīsena Bhaṭṭāraka and Ajitakīrti, disciple of Śāntikīrti.

The inscriptions in Śravaṇabeḷgoḷa form a very important source material for the history of Jainism in the South; they give many details of temples, grants, Jain Saṅghas, Munis, Bhaṭṭārakas and other matters.

There are a few inscriptions which refer to construction of Jaina temples or grants made for their maintenance in the Mysore District. In the Chamarajanagar Taluka, there is a village called Maleyūr where the small hill seems to have been hallowed by the visits of many Jaina saints. According to Dr. Saletore, Maḷeyūr in the Chamarajnagar Taluka "was another stronghold of Jainism. Here on the hill called Kanakagiri were famous *basadis* of gods Vijayanātha and Candraprabha. In A. D. 1355, a Telugu by name Ādidāsa caused an image of Vijayadeva made. He was the disciple of Hemacandra who belonged to the Hanasoge *baḷi* and of Lalitakīrti Bhaṭṭāraka..." (*Medieval Jainism*, p. 328). No 146 (1513 A. D.) is in praise of Bhaṭṭākaḷaṅka-munipa of Pustaka Gaccha and Desigaṇa. Vṛṣabhadeva, the chief disciple of the chief of the ascetics Municandrārya wrote the memorial and the same was engraved by Vidyānandopādhyāya. Similarly Ādideva, the disciple of Municandra-deva, carved out his Guru's footprints (No. 148 - 1518 A. D.). Lakṣmaṇa Munīśvara obtained initiation in Pārśvanātha Jina Temple in Hemādri. The foot-prints were carved out by Vijayappaiya (No. 149 - 1674 A. D.).

Though there are numerous inscriptions in the Shimoga District, very few are relevant to our purpose. Many of them are very elaborate but there are only a few which refer to Sallekhanā. There are however two points which are important from the points of Jaina history: (1) The history of the powerful princes who were Jainas and who were called Santaras ruled over this part for three centuries. They came to power in the 7th century during the time of Vinayāditya, a King of Western Cālukyas. Jianadatta Rāya was the founder of the line in the South in the 9th century as noted by Dr. Saletore and he is connected with the story of goddess

Padmāvatī of Humcha. An inscription in Shikarpur Taluka (No. 8 - A. D. 1080) refers to a grant to the temple of Jina. (2) Inscription No. 4 (1122 A. D.) of Shimoga and some others are important as they mention Muni Simhanandi Ācārya having assisted the Ganga Kings who patronised Jainism in part of the Mysore Territory known as the Gangawādi country. Besides, the lineage of the Ācāryas of Krānūr-gaṇa is given; Simhanandi, Arhadbali, Dāmanandi, Bālacandra, Meghacandra, Guṇacandra, Guṇanandi, Prabhācandra, Māghanandi, whose colleagues were Anantavīrya and Municandra. The disciples of the latter were Śrutakīrti, Kanakanandi Vādirāja, Mādhavacandra and Bālacandra. Prabhācandra's disciple was Buddhacandra (*Introduction*, Vol. VII, p. 15).

There are many inscriptions in the Sāgar Taluka which refer to the Sāḷuva Kings who were Jainas and who had their capital in Saṅgītapura or Hadu-halli where there are still three Jaina temples, one of them having the idols of the twenty-four Tīrthaṅkaras and of Dharaṇendra and Padmāvatī. They built temples or encouraged the rich merchants like Padmaṇṇa-sheṭṭi to build them (Nos. 163 and 164). In Nagar Taluka, there is an inscription No. 46 (1530 A. D.) which is in praise of Vidyānanda-svāmi. He is famous as Vādi Vidyānanda who established the greatness of Jina in the Court of Sāḷuva Deva Rāya and wiped out the other creeds. He supported the *munis* of Gerasoppa and held great festivals in sacred places like Kopaṇa (i. e. Koppal), Beḷguḷa of Gommaṭa and other sacred places. There is a list of Jaina saints of the line, from which Vādi Vidyānanda descended.

SECTION IV

Voluntary Deaths under Other Religions

Society and religions in the past approved different forms of voluntary deaths as acts of piety, conducive to religious merit. Sometimes such acts have been condemned as repugnant to all morals and human conscience. The Hindu Dharmaśāstras sanction various modes of death. Dr. Upendra Thakur has referred to numerous treatises by Hindu writers on the subject on page 9 of his book. 'The History of Suicide in India.'

The Hindu scriptures lay down various rules for the conduct of forest hermits. A hermit is permitted to go with his wife or leave her in charge of his son. He has to subsist on flowers, fruits, roots and vegetables, leading a life of self-continence, or self-restraint and of compassion towards all creatures. He should sleep on bare ground and should not enjoy the things that give pleasure. "If the forest hermit suffers from some incurable disease and cannot properly perform his duties or feels death to be near, he should start on the great journey (*mahāprasthāna*), turning his face towards the North-East, subsisting on water and air only, till the body falls to rise no more (*Manu*, vi 31)... a forest hermit may resort to the distant journey or may enter water or fire or may throw himself from a precipice."[1]

Whether starting on the great journey or falling down from a precipice is sinful or not seems to have received the attention of writers on Dharamśāstra. Suicide was condemned as a great sin. "Inspite of this general attitude," says Dr. Kane, "exceptions were made by the Smṛitis, epics and purāṇas..At extremely holy places like the Prayāga, the

1. *History of Dharmaśāstra* by Dr. P. V. Kane, Vol. II, Part II, p. 922.

Sarasvatī, and Benaras, persons were allowed to kill themselves by drowning with the desire of securing release from Saṁsāra. The Śalyaparva (39, 33-34) states : "Whoever abandons his body at Pṛthūdake on the Northern bank of Sarasvatī after repeating the Vedic prayers would not be troubled by death thereafter." The Anuśāsana Parva (25, 62-64) says that if a man knowing the Vedānta and understanding the ephemeral nature of life abandons life in the holy Himālayas by fasting, he would reach the world of Brahma. The Matsya Purāṇa eulogises the peak of Amarakaṇṭaka by stating, "whoever dies at Amarakaṇṭaka by fire, poison, water or fasting enjoys the pleasures described in verses 28-33. He who throws himself down from the peak never returns to *saṁsāra*."[2]

A man guilty of Brāhmaṇa murder was allowed to meet death at the hands of archers or throw himself head foremost into fire. Ādipurāṇa refers to Mahāprasthāna and other forms of committing suicide by entering into fire or water or falling from a precipice and says that such person does not incur any sin "but on the contrary goes to heaven."[3]

It however appears that the Ṛgveda and the Brāhmaṇas do not contain verses sanctioning or approving religious suicide. "It is only in such late works as the Jābāla and Kaṇṭhaśruti Upaniṣads that it is expressly laid down that the saṃnyāsin who has acquired full insight, may enter upon the great journey, or choose death by voluntary starvation, by drowning, by fire or by hero's fate."[4]

Islam has neither advocated nor sanctioned voluntary deaths. The Quran says : "It is not for every soul to die save by God's permission ordained for an appointed time ... cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands." The

2. *Ibid.*, p. 925.
3. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 386.
4. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 22.

Muslims regarded suicide as a revolt against the will of God. The historical instance of Bāber offering his own life to save his son Humāyun who was on death-bed and dying with that prayer is quite popular even among students.

Buddhism condemns suicide but there are stories of individual monks having committed suicide in a heat of passion by hanging, falling down from the mountain-top etc. Besides self-surrender culminating in voluntary death was held in great honour in many Buddhistic countries. "It happens (or it used to happen) that Chinese monks beg for fuel, build a funeral pyre, sit crossed-legged on it, cover their head with linen soaked in oil and set themselves on fire. With some branches of the Chinese Mahāyāna, the burning of the skull was an essential part of the ordination as a future Buddha — a symbol of the holocaust for which human courage is now-a-days inadequate." Besides, the stories of suicide by Sīha, Sappadāsa, Vakkali and Godhika disclose that Buddhist monks and nuns resorted to suicide.[5]

After giving accounts of the aforesaid suicides and of others, Dr Thakur summarises the position thus : "From the above accounts it is clear that religious suicide was approved long in India. But the most significant point to remember is that only those persons who lived fully and acquired high ascetic power were authorised to undertake the act. To others not posseseed of the requisite merits or qualifications this right was generally denied..."[6]

The practice of *Satī*, that is, self-immolation by the wife on the funeral pyre of her husband is well-known to students of 'Ancient Indian History'. The Mahābhārata, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Viṣṇu Purāṇa contain instances of such immolation. Dr. Thakur quotes from Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya (1.86) to show that the object behind the practice was religious merit : "She who follows her husband in death dwells

5. *History of Suicide in India* by Upendra Thakur, p. 107.
6. *Ibid.*, pp 110-111.

in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the human body, viz. 3 $^{1}/_{2}$ crores of years. In heaven she, being solely devoted to her husband and praised by bevies of heavenly damsels, sports with her husband for as long as the rule of fourteen Indras. That woman who ascends the funeral pyre when the husband dies is equal to Arundhati in her character and is praised in heaven." According to Hārīta : "that woman who follows her husband in death purifies three families viz. of her mother, of her father and of her husband." "But there are old commentators who are opposed to this custom."[7]

I may also add that in ancient Greece and Egypt there appear to have been instances of forced or voluntary self-immolation of women. History records instances of vassals and slaves committing suicide with their kings or noblemen on the same principle of the Hindu belief underlying the *Satī*. Reference may be made to the whole communities in Russia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries having resorted to death or burnt themselves to death from religious motives. Opposition seems to have been voiced from time to time to such practices on the ground that self-destruction was most horrible. Plato and Aristotle object to self-destruction "as cowardice and an offence against the state which loses an individual."[8]

In South India, we have instances of memorials erected in honour of women who died by *Satī* in the form of *Mastical*, that is, '*Mahā Satī Kal.*' In the case of kings or generals who died of heroic acts their memories are glorified by Veeragals, that is, stones for heroes. Such stones are found both in Karnātaka and in Tamil Nāḍu. Sometimes they contain inscriptions which give interesting accounts of the person whose memory is perpetuated. Such stones bear some figures carved on them; emblems of the sun and the moon

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

8. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, p. 30.

are also found on them suggesting that the memory will last as long as the sun and moon shine on the earth.

Another practice which was glorified in India is the practice of *Jauhur*. Whenever the Rajputs lost in a battle, or their city was captured by their enemies, every female in a family or the whole tribe as necessary, had recourse to immolation by burning themselves in fire in order to escape from threatened dishonour. The practice of *Sati* seems to have been in vogue even in Bengal upto the first quarter of the 19th century. Dr. Thakur has quoted an English translation of a poem by Ravindranāth Tagore as his homage to *Satī*. It is enough to quote a few concluding lines: "You have beautified the death and sanctified it too. You have made the funeral pyre a place of eternal bliss like the bedstead of a newly wedded couple. By your sacred sacrifices of yourself the flames of Bengal have purified....We will bow down before the fire which is imperishable, which carries your living memories.... which is the emblem of your final union....Death, how easy, how glowing and how noble it is..."[9]

It is difficult to assess at this distance of time whether all such deaths were voluntary or were forced on unwilling women by fear of social stigma or fear of religious punishment. We have records of cases where women running back from the pyres were driven back or subjected to tyranny of horrible character.

Chtistianity forbids suicide. The commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill, neither thyself nor another." The Church treated the dead bodies of suicides with no mercy and the usual services and rituals were denied to them It appears that the earlier Fathers approved of suicides which were committed to secure martyrdom, to avoid apostacy or to protect virginity.

Though it is certain that all religions condemn suicide as unethical and opposed to religion, different faiths have

9. *History of Suicide in India* by Upendra Thakur, pp 183–184.

their own reasons to approve of voluntary deaths in different forms motivated by acquisition of religious merit or hopes of having a better life in the next birth. The idea that one should escape births and rebirths in the world is in the spirit of most of the religions in the East. In fact, it is the aspiration of every religiously-conscious individual to free himself from the fetters of the *karma* by leading a noble life of austerity and meditation.

At what stage and in what manner, life can reasonably be considered to have attained spiritual purity so as to permit the individual to resort to austerities leading to a release from the physical body has been the concern of different faiths. Religious convictions and patriotism and other like lofty motives have been the sources of noble inspiration for human actions. So, the ultimate decision whether any particular voluntary death in accordance with any religion is suicide will depend upon the motive, the means adopted and the consequences that ensue therefrom.

SECTION V

SUICIDE

Suicide is killing oneself by means employed by oneself. The corresponding word in Saṁskrit is *Ātmaghāta* or *Ātmahatya* (self-destruction). The natural instinct of all living beings is self-preservation by protecting oneself against all odds and attacks which are likely to cause injury to the body. Every living being has a fondness for its body and takes care of it by adopting such methods or modes as are necessary to keep it in sound health, free from illness or any form of suffering.

Religion regards the human body as a receptacle of the soul. Man is enjoined by religion and nature to keep it in a sound condition. A sound body is the index of sound health. Man cannot live in happiness if he is not in sound health. He cannot aslo practice his religion with concentration and devotion unless his body is fit to allow him his peace of mind. Mental peace and bodily heatlh are wedded together; one cannot be divorced from the other. That is why every religion lays down certain rules of conduct which are intended to keep the body and mind in good health.

Life is complex and the problems of life are vast. A smooth life needs an ability to solve with ease and skill all the difficulties that often arise in everybody's life. Such ability can be acquired by hard and intelligent study and observation. It has to be used with honesty and grit. He who faces life boldly and with requisite understanding shall alone achieve success. What is necessary is that we should learn to live with courage and honour. Most of our difficulties or misfortunes are of our own making, directly or indirectly. People come to grief because of their weaknesses, physical and mental.

We are all imperfect but the beauty of life lies in trying to be perfect. Self-knowledge, self-control and self-reverance are the sources of our real happiness; all our endeavours should therefore be directed towards acquisition of these qualities to the best of our ability.

Suicide is normally a misfortune of one's own making. A victim of suicide is either a victim of his mental weaknesses or of external circumstances which he is not able to circumvent. In modern times, mental and ethical strength has been fast deteriorating, whether it be in an individual or in any social group. Our civilization has brought with it a large number of psychological and sociogical problems which an individual without courage can hardly solve. Disappointments and frustration in personal life, emotional or sentimental breakdown in married life or love-affairs, unexpected and unbearable economic loss in trade or business, sudden and heart-breaking grief brought on by the death of the nearest and dearest, appearance of some disease which is incurable or socially reprehensible, sudden development of melencholia or depression either. due to heredity or other hidden causes, public disgrace or dishonour of one's self or the family, an unexpected shock due to failure to realise an ambition and many other unusual factors may be regarded, either individually or cumulatively, as causes driving an individual to commit suicide under a sudden impulse.

Kauṭilya has mentioned some of the causes of suicide in his Arthaśāstra : " All kinds of sudden deaths centre round one or the other of the following causes : offence to women or kinsmen, claiming inheritance, professional competition, hatred against rivals, commerce guilds and any other legal disputes, is the cause of anger; anger is the cause of death.

" If a man or woman under the infatuation of love, anger or other sinful passions commits or causes to commit, suicide by means of ropes, arms, or poison, he or she shall be dragged by means of rope along the public road by hands of a

caṇḍāla. For such murders as above, neither cremation rites nor any obsequies, usually performed by the relatives shall be observed."[1]

"Sociologists have put forward numerous explanations in their suicide-notes, but they are anything but reliable, as they are rationalizations covering up powerful impulses. Abnormal grief accruing from the loss of a loved one, mutual jealousy, mental difficulties, infidelity, desertion, family discord, pride, remorse and shame are all symptoms of difficulty in personal adjustment. The forces of fear and anxiety, feelings of inferiority, hatred, aggressiveness, revenge, guilt and other mental disorders are such that they prevent people from attaining emotional maturity. This emotion immaturity has probably been the most powerful factor compelling a man choose suicide as the only solution to seemingly insurmountable difficulties."[2]

Human nature being the same everywhere, the causes of suicide have been universally identical all over the world. Modern civilization has placed more refined and secretive means at the disposal of the community for commitment of suicide. Sleeping tablets and poisons have become more easily accessible. There are now greater numbers of cases of unbearable emotional stresses and strains than before. There are more opportunities today for a life of ease, luxury and lust. Promiscuity and permissiveness are new factors of disruption and frustration. Night clubs, cinemas, cabarets, drinking parties and such other shows, where normal life of satisfaction and contentment becomes impossible, lead to unhappy family life. Frequent repetitions of situations which bring about feelings of disappointment, depression, mental and emotional conflicts irresistably drive the victim to the horrible step of suicide.

Emile Durkheim says that the term suicide is applied "to all cases of death resulting directly or indirectly from a posi-

1. *Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya* by Shama Satry, Chap. VII, p. 248.
2. *History of Suicide in India* by Upendra Thakur, p. 19.

tive or negative act of the victim himself, which he knows will produce result."[3] This definition is too wide to be logical. In cases of suicide, the death is sudden, the mental condition is not normal and the means used to bring about death are questionable. Another sociologist Esquirol differs from this definition and says, "That man does not kill himself, who obeying some noble and generous sentiment, throws into peril, exposes himself to inevitable death and willingly sacrifice his life in obedience to the laws, to keep pledged faith of his country's safety." According to him, "suicide shows all characteristics of mental alienation."[4] These views except from the category of suicide deaths inspired by religious faith, patriotic fervour or other lofty motive. They include in the category of suicides only deaths which take place as a result of mental imbalance caused by one reason or the other. Dr. Bourdin concurs with this view and except from suicide "all voluntary deaths inspired not only by religious faith but even by lofty affection."

Durkheim has mentioned some deaths under the category of "Altruistic Suicides." "Danish warriors, in olden times, considered it a disgrace to die in bed of old age or sickness and killed themselves to escape the ignominy. The Goths are said to have believed that those who die a natural death languish forever in caverns full of venomous creatures. Similar notions seem to have prevailed amongst the Spanish Celts. Mention is made in this category of deaths of *satī* in India, and of the nobles and slaves killing themselves in Gaul and Havaii on the death of their Chiefs or Masters. The main reasons for such suicides were either the sense of duty or concept of social obligation, disobedience to which resulted in supposed harms after death or survival of the events. There are cases which the society regarded as obligatory."[5]

3. *Suicide* by Durkheim, Introduction, p. 2.

4. *Ibid*., p. 3.

5. *Suicide* by Durkheim, Chap. IV, p. 220.

Durkheim refers in her book to suicides in primtive societies where individuals committed suicide through simple vainglory or without provocation. "Titus Livy, Ceaser, Valirious Maximus, all tell us not without astonishment mixed with admiration, of the calmness with which the Gallic and German barbarians kill themselves. Celts were known to bind themselves to suffer death in consideration of wine or money. Others boasted of retreating neither before fire nor the ocean. Modern travellers have noticed such practices in many other societies. In Polynesia, a single offence often decides a man to commit suicide....The readiness of the Japanese to disembowel themselves for the slightest reason is even well-known. A strange sort of duel is even reported there in which the effort is not to attack one another but to excel in dexterity in opening one's stomach. Similar facts are recorded in China, Tibet and the Kingdom of Siam."[6]

The latest report of the WHO (World Health Organiation) states that there are a thousand people in the world who commit suicide everyday. The common methods adopted for committing suicide are jumping from heights, jumping into wells or deep water, jumping or lying down before a running train, shooting, hanging, poisoning by use of insecticide or other drugs, burning oneself with the use of kerosene or petrol or use of electrical wires (live) etc. According to Dr. Vinubhai D. Shah, mental disorders and unhappy love affairs contribute to 36 % of all the causes. Treatises on Psychological Medicine deal with a large number of psychological disorders which, if not treated in time, are most likely to lead the victims to suicide. Mental depression is the result of some distressing circumstance. Depression leads to unhappiness, insomnia, ideas of guilt, slowness of thought, feelings of exhaustion or vague pains and the fear of insanity. Such victims of mental illness need immediate admissions to hospitals as

6. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

otherwise, they might fall a prey to unusual thoughts of suicide. They deserve pity rather than condemnation.[7]

For a normal person, suicide is dreadful and repugnant to all ethics. In our country suicides are more common in towns than in villages because of the complexity of life. The females are more prone to commit suicides than males. Ill treatment of daughters-in-law in a joint family, disappointment in love affairs, failures in examinations when severely chastised by the elders in the family, starvation, pregnancy due to illegitimate contacts are some of the causes. " Among the States, the maximum suicide rates are in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nādu and the Saurāshṭra part of Gujarāt. It is said that every eight hours, one woman in Gujarāt commits suicide." (Dr. Shah)

From what has been said above, it is sufficient for our purpose to conclude that the main psychological and physical features of such suicides are : (1) The victim is under an emotional stress; (2) He or she is overpowered with a feeling of disgrace, fear, disgust or hatred at the time when suicide is resorted to; (3) The main intention of committing suicide is to escape from the consequences of certain acts or events; disgrace, agony, punishment, social stigma or tyranny of treatment etc. (4) The mind is far away from religious or spiritual considerations. (5) The means employed to bring about the death are weapons of offence or death; (6) The death is sudden in most cases unless the victim is rescued earlier. (7) The act is committed in secrecy. (8) It causes misery or bereavement to the kith and kin.

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7. Dr. Shah Vinubhai D., *Suicide : The Reason Why*, 'Illustrated Weekly of India', 18th Nov., 1973, pp. 33-35.

SECTION VI

SUICIDE AND THE LAW

The origin of law is the society itself. In the primitive society, there was no law in the modern sense of the term. The attitude of the group or its opinion about any particular matter regulated the conduct or behaviour of the rest. Such views or attitudes became in course of time the rules of obligation. In course of time such rules received recognition from society as "custom" which exercised such social pressure as was satisfying to all its members. Co existence in close proximity with each other created a need for restrictions on human conduct in the interest of general safety. Human nature, whether educated or uneducated exhibits itself in varying degrees of self-control and discipline. The use of violence, the tendency to trespass upon others' land and the desire for appropriation of what is not his own had to be restricted to ensure safety and peace in social living. That is how restrictions on the use of violence, thieving and deception came to be imposed in the interest of the society itself. Besides, there arose tensions between those who accepted such restrictions as being conducive to the well-being of the society and those that rejected them as curtailing their liberty.

It is plain that in course of time the vast majority in the society must have felt that the ties of kinship, common good and peaceful living were essential for a stable environment and progress. The slow process of growth disclosed that what was once optional became habitual and deviations which went unnoticed received serious attention by way of reprimand or punishment. In course of time, such restrictions or rules became the means of social control.

The evolution of criminal law consists in the imposition of prohibition on anti-social conduct and behaviour. Such pro-

hibitions related not only to the types of conduct that would be punishable but also what punishment was liable to be imposed. Any conduct which a powerful section of the community felt to be injurious or harmful to its own interests, or endangering its safety, comfort or stability was regarded as heinous; it was repressed with deterrent severity by the authority in power.

"Crimes therefore originate in the government policy of the moment, the governing power in society at any given period has made or accepted, rules of law which forbid a man to bring about certain specified results by his conduct. Since the policy is influenced by many considerations, it is not easy to discover in any specific era of new law."[1]

In a changing society, notions of what is objectionable have always been changing. Prevention or punishment of particular conduct is dependent upon the scope and purpose of the criminal law that is in force for the time being. W. Friedmann has referred to the German Criminal Law which made a crime predominantly dependent upon the policy of the state. Act of 1935 under the Nazi regime stated : "Any person who commits any act which the law declares to be punishable or which is deserving of penalty according to the fundamental conceptions of a penal law and sound popular feeling shall be punished."[2] He has also quoted from the Penal Code, 1926 of Soviet Russia which provides that "a crime is any socially dangerous act or commission which threatens the foundations of the Soviet political structure and that system of the law which has been established by the workers and Peasants Government for the period of transition to a communist structure."[3] It is obvious that changes in the law in such manner obviously give a political direction to what is otherwise a measure for the protection and safety of the society.

1. *Kenny's Outlines of Criminal Law*, edited by Turner, p. 14.
2. *Law in a Changing Society* by W. Friedmann, p. 55.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

It is common experience that with the State undertaking many commercial activities as in India, new offences are being created in the fields of public communications, transport and welfare standards.

"The state of the criminal law continues to be – as it should – a decisive reflection of social consciousness of a society, what kind of conduct an organized community considers, at a given time, sufficiently condemnable to impose official sanctions, impairing the life, liberty, or property of the offender, is a barometer of the moral and social thinking of a community. Hence, the criminal law is particularly sensitive to changes in social structure and social thinking."[4]

The correctness of these views can be borne out by what has been happening in our country and the other parts of the world. Child marriage was not an offence in India until 1929 when the Sharda Act was passed making marriage of a boy below 18 years of age and of a girl below 16 years of of age an offence. Abortion has been an offence for ages. Recently with the introduction of the schemes of Family Planning, abortion under certain circumstances by a married or unmarried woman has ceased to be an offence due to the enactment of "Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971." Adultery, is not an offence in many Western countries. Marrying during the lifetime of a living wife is an offence amongst the Hindus, though it is not so amongst the Muslims in India itself.

W. Fredmann has quoted many instances of strange practices which would have been normally offence but were not so treated in a particular country. The Spartans killed their weakling children by exposure so that vigour of the race was not impaired. In National Socialist Germany, whole groups of people who were considered as inferior in vigour and sanity or otherwise useless were exterminated or kept under confinement.[5] Different theories have been propounded as to why the

4. *Ibid.*, p. 143. 5. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

insane people should not be subjected to the same punishment as the sane when they commit an offence. The Supreme Court of the United States has held on 22-1-1973 that abortion is legal. Cardinal Krol, President of the National Conference of Bishops said that the ruling " sets in motion developments which are terrifying to contemplation." On the other hand, Dr. Alan F. Guttmachar, President of the Planned Parenthood said that it was " a wise and courageous stroke for the protection of a woman's physical and emotional health." Herbert W. Armstrong says : " But is abortion murder? The Supreme Court carefully avoided answering the question of when a human life begins. It said : 'We need not resolve the difficult question of when an unborn child actually becomes a human person, with a legal right to live.' It continues : 'Now the question of whether legal abortion amounts to legal permission to cammit murder does not appear to raise many eyebrows or ignite indignant flames of heated protest. These current trends accompany the alarming increase in crime, in broken homes and divorce, increasing violence, racial strife, riots, arson and sniper killings."[6] There is nothing strange if similar feelings are expressed by a section of the Indian society over legalization of abortion. Similarly Laws sanctioning " preventive detention " of persons who revolt against the State or are considered habitual offenders vary from country to country.

It may be pertinent to mention that in ancient India the thinking of the State as regards offences and punishment varied with the caste of the offender and that of the victim. The History of Dharmaśāstra quotes from Daṇḍaviveka that the considerations which should weigh in awarding punishment are : the offender's caste, the value of the thing....use or usefulness of thing with regard to which the offence was committed.[7] Even the severity of punishment depeneded upon the caste. In the case of an offence like theft, the amount of fine

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6. '*Plain Truth*' of May, 1973.

7. *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. III, p. 392.

varied with the caste of the offender, the criterion being that higher the caste the greater the fine as it was presumed that the man of the higher caste must know better the heineousness of the crime. "Gaut XII, 1, 8–12; Manu VIII, 267–68 prescribe that a Vaiśya, Kṣatriya or a Śūdra abusing or defaming a Brahmin was to be respectively punished with a fine of 100 panas, 150 panas and with corporal punishment (cutting off tongue) while a Brahmin defaming a Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra was to be fined 50, 25 or 12 panas respectively... In the case of adultery and rape, the caste of the offender and of the woman made a great difference in the punishment awarded. For adultery with a woman of the same caste Yaj. II, 266 prescribed the highest amercement, the middling one when the paramour was of a higher caste and if the male be of a lower caste than the woman, the male offender was sentenced to death and the woman had her ears cut off.[8] A Brahmin was not sentenced to death or corporal punishment for any offence whatever, but if he were guilty of an offence deserving the death penalty he was to be punished by ordering his entire head to be shaved; he might be banished from the country. Āpastambha Dharmasūtra (II, 10. 27, 16, 17 P) lays down that a Brahmin guilty of murder, theft, forcible seizure of another's land was to have his eyes covered with cloth for the whole of his life while a śūdra guilty of any of the three was to receive the death sentence."[9]

It will be thus evident that criminology has not been an exact science. it has not been uniform even in the same country. It has varied with the races and the national temperament. There is no royal road to the solution of problems connected with the evil affections of human temperament and conduct. Every country has adopted a system which reflects the civilization, genius and character of its people. Even for infliction of death penalty, the mode adopted varied from guillotine to the electrocution chair or the simple rope.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 395.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 396.

All jurists admit that crimes punishable under the law of a particular state are essentially the creations of that State and may change from time to time. As Wolfonden Committee Report, 1958 in England states: The function of the criminal law is "to preserve public order and decency, to protect citizens from what is offensive or injurious and to provide sufficient safeguards against exploitation and corruption of others, particularly those who are young, weak in body or mind, inexperienced, or in a state of physical, official or economic dependence. ....It is not the function of the law to intervene in the private lives of citizens or seek to enforce any particular pattern of behaviour further than is necessary to carry out the above purposes. ....Opinions will differ as to what is offensive or injurious or inimical to the common good and as to what constitutes exploitation or corruption and those opinions will be based on the prevailing moral, social or cultural standards."[10]

The purpose of law is not to secure or safeguard inner goodness or spirituality but to ensure safety and certainty of public conduct and co-operation. So actions which were considered spiritual in character were left over to the Church for regulation. Ethics concerns itself with inner goodness and cannot be regulated by external laws, so also, actions which were sanctioned by the Church or the spiritual community. Therefore even though suicide was condemned in all countries when the act was committed in a fit of emotional stress or sense of frustration, the same was not objected to by the State when it was the result of religious noble considerations. In ancient Rome, death by suicide was considered noble or honourable. The Hindu Dharmaśāstra sanctioned *Mahāprasthāna* or other forms of death at holy places. The Suicide Act, 1961 of England lays down that "the rule of law whereby it is a crime for a person to commit suicide is hereby abrogated." Formerly, the common law endeavoured to deter men from

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10. *History of Criminal Law* by Nigam, p. 16,

suicide by the threat of degradations to be inflicted upon the corpse of the person who had committed suicide and also by threatening to forfeit his property to the State. The corpse was to be degraded by being buried on the high way or being buried without any service. Confiscation of property was abolished in 1870.

The Athenian Law did not define suicide as an offence. It laid down that so long as suicide does not become so frequent as to threaten seriously the well-being of the community, the State has no motive to intervene by legislation against it. However the leaders of thought took a different view. Pythegoras, the great mathematician, took the view that suicide was an unwarranted rebellion against the will of God as it behoved everyone to wait until God was pleased to remove and set him free. Plato condemned it on the same ground. Aristotle agreed with this view. The Stoics did not regard suicide as objectionable. According to them, it is for each individual to decide whether living or death is preferable to him. The Mohemmedans regarded suicide as being in contravention of the Quoran which lays down that whoever kills himself will suffer in fires of Hell.

France has a history of its own on the law of suicide. An ordinance was issued by Louis XIV in 1690 prescribing a sentence of condemnation of any one who committed suicide. The French Revolution of 1789 made changes in the old laws. It erased suicide from the list of legal crimes. Religion was against suicide and prescribed punishment by denying service or prayers. The German Penal Code provides for punishment against an abettor. In Russia, attempt to commit suicide is punishable with fine which may vary from person to person. The Penal Code of the State of New York passed in 1881 regards suicide as a crime; an attempt so commit suicide is punishable with imprisonment upto two years. " In feudal Japan suicide was an ultimate act of honour, redemption or union."

In Canada, it is an accepted policy since 1972 that suicide would not be treated as an offence. So far as America is con-

cerned, attempt to commit suicide is still punishable only in nine states. In other states of America it is considered that persons who fail in their attempt to commit suicide are fit for treatment in hospitals by psychiatrists. They are to be sympathised for their miseries and pitied for their weak minds. They are treated as victims of circumstances of events over which they were unable to exercise any control. Modern medical science has made rapid progress and the melancholy or the mental phobia of such persons can be remedied, if diagonised and treated in time.

In India, the Indian Penal Code does not define suicide. Section 309 which prescribes punishment for "attempt to commit suicide" lays down : "Whoever attempts to commit suicide and does any act towards the commission of such offence shall be punished with simple imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine or both." Some of the commentators on this section have taken the view that the words "any act" occurring in the section are wide enough to take in their purview "fasting" or "refraining from taking bodily sustenance". I cannot agree with the view that omission to take food is an act under the section because one of the principles of interpretation of a criminal statute is that it should be strictly construed. Section 32 of the Penal Code lays down the rule for interpretation of the sections in the Penal Code. It lays down : "In every part of this Code, except where a contrary intention appears from the context, words which refer to acts done extend also to *illegal omissions*". What is illegal is indicated in Section 43 of the Penal Code : (1) everything which is an offence, or (2) which is prohibited by law or (3) which furnishes a ground for civil action or (4) omission to do whatever he is legally bound to do." Law requires every individual to conduct himself so as not to injure others. An act becomes an injury when it causes harm to another in body, mind, reputation or property. There is no law which casts an obligation on every individual not to fast because fasting is sanctioned by most of the religions in

India as conducive both to physical and mental health, besides providing an opportunity for worship and meditation. A fast undertaken on religious grounds causes no pain or harm to anybody. Since such fast is not directed against anybody so as to cause him mental pressure or anxiety, it cannot be regarded as a harmful act. Every fast which is spiritually motivated exudes an atmosphere of tranquillity, peace and piety about it.

I have briefly surveyed the law on suicide as it exists in most of the countries in the world. The obvious conclusion is that not all countries in the world regard suicide as an offence punishable under the local law. It is also evident that in some countries, the state and the church have been taking opposite views on the subject. Further it is seen that even in countries where suicide had been an offence, the law has been abrogated. This is as it should be. Law is not static but changes with the changing concepts of the society on various matters of public conduct and social behaviour. Laws change even with the change of Government. It has always been the strength of puplic opinion that has been the determining factor as to what act or omission should constitute a crime. Law normally forbids what is revolting to the moral sentiments of the society. It is common experience that moral sentiments do change from time to time and from country to country. The purpose of law as already stated has never been goodness of inner life but the rightness of outer conduct and co-operation.

Facing death in a war, knowing full well that death is the likely result, is, applauded as heroism or *vīramaraṇa.* Dying for religion is called Martyrdom. Facing death for a noble cause earns the title of a national hero or a Saviour. It cannot therefore be disputed that death for a noble cause or end has always been hailed by all nations, though under different designations.

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SECTION VII

SALLEKHANĀ IS NOT SUICIDE

Though it is possible that the word "suicide" was used to cover all deaths which were not homicidal, it has now gained a special connotation to mean "death" which is in the nature of self-destruction. It cannot be denied that the concept of Sallekhanā, its religious character and the method of achieving it were not known to the English people. Even in the beginning of the 19th century, Geothe said : "Suicide is an incident in human life which however much disputed and discussed demands the sympathy of everyone and in every age must be dealt with anew." The great German Philosopher and writer merely implied that the person who commits suicide is a helpless victim of circumstances which may vary and therefore require a sympathetic approach from time to time.

Suicide is a common phenomenon in all the countries of the world. It has therefore attracted the attention of the great sociologists and psychologists in every country. Durkheim, the great French sociologist, was of the opigion that since instances of suicide do not yield all information about the cause in each case, "consequently *Knowledge* by the actor of the deadly consequences of his action should be the fundamental factor in deciding that a death is suicide. Most importantly, they (i. e. the Western Writers) implicitly assumed that before one could judge the actor in the case, one had always to know his *intentions*, the *situation* in which he found himself and the nature and the outcome of his *actions*"[1]

Dealing with the psychological effects on the survivors of a suicide the author proceeds : "The suicide has great

1. *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. XV, p. 376.

impact on the survivors. Those reactions generally vary directly in intensity with the distance of relationship with the suicidal person. Among the group in a close relationship, the spouse, children, family, relatives, friends or....a variety of feelings and reactions may be aroused. These may include : (1) strong feelings of loss, accompanied by sorrow and mourning, (2) strong feeling of anger, (3) guilt, shame, embarassment with feelings of responsibility for the death, (4) feelings of failure or inadequacy to supply what was needed could not be supplied, (5) feelings of relief, (6) feelings of having been deserted, (7) ambivalence with a mixture of all the above, (8) reactions of doubt and self-questioning whether enough was attempted, (9) denial of complicity, (10) arousal of one's own impulses towards suicide."[2] I may add to this list; feelings of horror at the unexpected death and in an unexpected manner.

The psychology of the persons committing suicide is more important than the effects of suicide on the kith and kin. "The typical suicidal person will generally reveal all or most of the following characteristics (1) : ambivalence—the desire, either conscious or unconscious or both, to live and to die, present at the same time; (2) feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, futility and inadequacy to handle problems; (3) feelings of either physical or psychological exhaustion or both (4) marked feelings of undeserved anxiety or tension, depression, anger, and/or guilt; (5) feelings of chaos and disorganization with inability to restore order; (6) moral swings, for example, from agitation to apathy or withdrawal; (7) cognitive constriction, inability to see alternative limitation or potentialities; (8) loss of interest in usual activities such as sex, hobbies and work; (9) physical distress such as insomnia, anorexia, psychosthenia and psychosomatic symptoms."[3] To this list may be added : emotional excitement, sense of depression or frustration or both. The causes of desire for immediate self-destruction are man-made. I have already enumerated some

2. *Ibid.*, p. 394. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 390.

of the causes in the concluding paragraph of the Chapter on "suicide."

Now let us examine the psychological and the sociological aspects of Sallekhanā to show that none of these characteristics is to be found either in the adoption of the vow or its fulfilment. The same may be examined with reference to (1) intentions, (2) situation, (3) the means adopted, and (4) the outcome of the action or its consequences.

The sole *intention* of the person adopting the vow is spiritual and definitely not temporal. The adoption of the vow is preceded by purification of the mind by a conquest of all the passions spread over a period of some years. The person adopting the vow wants to be liberated from the bondage of *karma* which has been responsible for all his ills in the world and for births and rebirths in different states or *gatis*. Contrary to the suicidal intention, there is no desire to put an end to life immediately by some violent or objectionable means. There is no question of escaping from any shame, frustration or emotional excitement. There is no intention to harm oneself or any member of one's own family.

The *situations* under which the vow should be adopted are well-defined. The vow is to be adopted "as a religious duty" (or to earn religious merit) "during a calamity, severe famine, old age or illness from which there is no escape or against which there is no remedy."[4] The instances of Bhadrabāhu and his disciples who migrated from the North to South on account of apprehension of severe famine lasting over a long period of twelve years and Bhadrabāhu adopting the vow when he felt that he was nearing his end are remarkable illustrations of the verse. The other instances mentioned in the Sravaṇa Beḷgoḷā and other inscriptions are also to the point. The most recent instance of saint Śrī Śāntisāgar Mahārāja illustrates how the vow was adopted when the eye-sight became weak and the other limbs became incapable of proper

4. *Ratnakaraṇḍa Śrāvakācāra* by Samantabhadra, Verse 122.

functioning. Besides the vow has to be adopted only with the consent of the spiritual master or *guru*. It is a vow which has to be most voluntarily adopted and joyfully observed.

The *mental condition* is one of absolute freedom from passion or attachment. To ensure complete purity of mind, the person adopting the vow must have subjugated all his passions and given up all attachments and possessions. He should have no sense of posessiveness. He should put an end to all family or friendly ties by disclosing his intentions and by asking their forgiveness with an open mind. He has also to discuss all his acts of commission and omission with his *Guru*. He should forgive everybody and must have developed full faith in religion and acquired clear knowledge of its principles.[5]

It is under these situations and this state of mind that the vow has to be adopted.

What are the *means* adopted towards the fulfilment of the vow ? Not the violent means of hanging, poison, stabbing, shooting or drowning in deep waters or jumping from the precipice. He has to fast according to well-regulated principles. He has to increase his days of fasting gradually. He has to change from the solid foods to liquid until he even gives up drinking of water. He has to spend his time in reading scriptures, meditation and self-introspection. He can devote part of his time to preaching religion to such of the devotees that may be present. He should neither hasten nor delay death. He should wait for the hour calmly, getting engrossed in deep meditation with complete detachment and inward concentration.

The *consequences* of death by Sallekhanā are neither hurtful nor sorrowful to any, because before adopting the vow, all kinds of ties have been terminated with common consent. The immediate consequence is one evoking reverence

5. *Ibid.*, Verses 123-125.

for the dead and the other of strengthening the faith of devotees in religion. The atmosphere around and about the dead body is one of veneration. There is neither sorrow nor mourning. The occasion is treated as a religious festival, with *pūjās*, *bhajans* and recitation of religious *mantras*. There is no place for grief but only for joy. Many would be admiring the spiritual heights reached by the departed, the calmness and peace with which death was faced and the new inspiration and devotion awakened by the supreme event.

Thus there is nothing in common between suicide and Sallekhanā except that in both cases there is death. In the case of suicide, death is brought about by objectionable means because harm is caused to one's own body and to the interests or feelings of the relatives and friends.

The Jaina thinkers have addressed themselves to this question of Sallekhanā being not a suicide and given very logical clarification. Amṛtacandra Sūri has stated : "He who is actuated by passions, puts an end to his life by stopping breath or by water, fire, poison or weapons is certainly guilty of suicide."[6] In Sallekhanā, all desires and passions are subjugated and the body is allowed to wither away gradually by fasts and meditation when the mind itself is in unique peace and full of bliss. Here death comes in due course gradually when the senses cease to function while in suicide death is brought about suddenly and prematurely by adoption of questionable methods. In his commentary on *Tattvārtha-Sūtra*, Pūjyapāda says : "A person who kills himself by means of poison, weapons etc. swayed by attachment, aversion or infatuation, commits suicide. But he who practises holy death is free from desire, anger or delusion. Hence it is not suicide."[7] The same view is expressed by Āśādhara when he says : "By becoming indifferent to the body as a result of the vow taken,

6. *Puruṣārtha-siddhyupāya* by Amṛtacandra, Verse 178.

7. *Reality* by S. A. Jain, p. 205.

there is no killing of oneself because that occurs when there is taking away of life by poison etc. in a heat of passion."[8]

The late Champat Rai Jain has clarified some misconceptions expressed by the *Simla Times* which accused that Jainism encouraged suicide. He wrote : " *Bhaktapratyākhyāna Maraṇa* is not proper for him who has many years of saintly life before him, who has no fear of starvation from a great famine, who is not afflicted by an incurable disease, and who is not faced by any sudden cause of death. Whoever desires to put an end to his life while still able, with his body, to observe the rules of the *dharma* and of the order properly falls from the true path."[9] Commenting on the passage, the author says : " There is no question here of a recommendation to commit suicide or of putting an end to one's life, at one's sweet will and pleasure, when it appears burdensome, or not to hold any charm worth living for. The true idea of Sallekhanā is only this that when death does appear at last one should know how to die, that is, one should die like a monk, not like a beast, bellowing and panting and making vain efforts to avoid the unavoidable. Had A. S. P. read anything of the true science of religion, he would have known that the soul is a simple substance and as such immortal. Death is only for compounds, whose dissolution is termed disintegration, and death, when it has reference to living organism, what is a compound of spirit and matter. By dying in the proper way, will is developed, and it is a great asset for the future life of the soul, which is a simple substance, will survive the bodily dissolution and death."[10] He concludes his discussion by saying : " The Jain Sallekhanā leaves ample time for further reconsideration of the situation, as the process, which is primarily intended to elevate the will, is extended over a period of days and is not brought to an end at once."[11]

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8. *Sāgāra-Dharmāmṛta* of Āśādhara, Canto VIII, Verse 8.
9. *Jainism and World Problems* by C. R. Jain, pp. 178–79.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

Everyone who has studied the Jaina Scriptures on the exposition of the principles and rules of Sallekhanā must admit that observance of the vow is a conscious and well-planned penance for self-realisation. A person committing suicide is weighed down wholly by mundane considerations.

Some of the Western writers have stated that Sallekhanā is suicide by starvation. In my opinion, the reasons for such view are not far to seek. They are born and brought up under a religious philosophy which speaks of the world and man as creations of God and that death by fasting, though, in accordance with the principles of an ancient religious philosophy which does not recognise any creator-God, is self-destruction against the will of God. They do not seem to have paid any attention to the various points of distinction between Sallekhanā and suicide. Durkheim has observed : " Men cannot be prevented from taking their lives through meditations on the mysteries surrounding us or through belief in an all powerful being, but infinitely removed from ourselves, to *whom we shall have to give account only in an undetermined future*."[12] Though she recognises that people die through meditation, she is unable to get over the idea that everybody has to render account of his deeds to God after death. The implication that all such deaths are accountable to God appears to be quite clear. As regards Jainism, she says that " the believer allowed himself to die of hunger." No further commentary is needed on this remark.

Dr. Radhakrishnan regards Sallekhanā a " form of suicide." As I have said earlier, the word suicide is being used very losely without weighing the points of distinction. The words *mahāprasthāna* and *samādhi-maraṇa* are used in the Hindu scriptures. It seems that the writers on Hindu Dharma Śāstra have not laid down such stringent rules of conquest of passions, purification of mind, regulated fasting and meditation as being the pre-requisites for adoption of the vow.

12. *Suicide* by Durkheim, p. 376.

I have already referred to Durkheim's view on suicide which takes no account of the religious and pious intentions and character of the vow of Sallekhanā to distinguish it from suicide. Esquirol differs from her view when he says : "that man does not kill himself, who, obeying only noble and generous sentiments, throws into certain peril, exposes himself to inevitable death and willingly sacrifices his life in obedience to the laws, to keep pledged faith of his country's safety."[13] He rightly points out that "suicide shows all characteristics of mental alienation." These views clearly except from the category of suicide such deaths as are inspired by religious faith, patriotism or other lofty motive. Dr. Bourdin concurs with these views and excepted from the category of suicide all "voluntary deaths inspired not only by religious faith or political conviction but even by lofty affection."

B. Lewis Rice who first collected and published the inscriptions on the hills and near about Sravaṇa Beḷgoḷa as Director of Archaeology of the Mysore State has made very unusual and unconvincing comments on the inscriptions which also depict in bear lines on the rocks, some figures lying down, being suggestive of persons who met death under the vow of Sallekhanā. He says : " The bitterest sitirist of human delusions could hardly depict a scene of sterner irony than the naked summit of this bare rock dotted with emaciated devotees, both men and women, in silent torture awaiting the hour of self-imposed death. The irony is complete when we remember that the avoidance of the destruction of life in whatever form is a fundamental doctrine of the sect." There would have been some apparent support for these remarks had they been made with reference to some paintings or statues expressive of the inner feelings of the person or persons concerned. The remarks are more imaginary than real, more sentimental than realistic and hence wholly biased, hardly expected from the pen of an archaeologist which ought to be objective in approach and precise in expression. Some of the inscriptions which are de-

13. *Maladies.*

tailed in their account lay down that the devotee, whether male or female, faced death with joy and engrossed in deep meditation. He makes no distinction between such death and of "persons borne to the banks of the Ganges to die.. suffocated with the holy soil." He proceeds: "In the case of persons too weak to perform the requirements of the vow, the proper ritual is recited within their hearing, and this is done I am told but do not vouchsafe for the truth of it, even for the domestic cattle and other animals at the time of their decease."[14] Nothing can be more misleading or perverted than placing reliance on hearsay garbled versions. The conclusions are bound to be unreal and far from truth.

Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson has made very satirical remarks on the subject: "The Sādhu climbs some sacred hill such as Pārasanātha, Girnār, or Śatrunjaya; and there, in order to do nothing that may lead to karma, he does absolutely nothing at all, but awaits death without moving hand or foot, head or body. The influence of a negative religion is then worked out to its irresistible conclusion, and with all the sorrows and ills of the world awaiting to be relieved, the soldier deserts his post in order to free his own soul from suffering. It is strange that a religious system which begins with the most minute regulations against the taking of the lowest insect life should end by encouraging human suicide."[15] It is impossible to find support for such versions from the scriptures. There is no injunction for simply lying down like a dead log of wood doing "absolutely nothing at all." There is no question of "soldier deserving his post" because the vow has to be adopted only when the ascetic who has preached and practised religion all along, is convinced that his end is near or that there is any circumstance of the type mentioned in the scriptures which sanction the adoption of the vow. Besides, there is no question of sudden stopping of food or lying down like a dead person. The ascetic has to conquer all his

14. *Epigraphia Carnāṭicā* by B. Rice, Vol. II, Introduction.

15. *Heart of Jainism* by Mrs. Sinclair, pp. 163–68.

passions, purify his mind and progress in the observance of the vow consistently with his physical and mental capacities.

To stigmatise Jainsm as "a negative religion" amounts to an uncharitable criticism founded on superficial study, with no real inclination to reach the depth of understanding. Jainism is a positive religion preaching that every living being is the maker of his own destiny. Only that philosophy which propounds reliance on other supernatural forces and miracles and leaves a living being to the mercy of some unknown force or factor that can be called a negative philosophy. Jainism is a religion of dynamism and purposive living.

It would be legally wrong and morally insupportable to categorise death by Sallekhanā as a suicide which is sudden self-destruction due to emotional and neurasthenic upsetment. Suicide causes harm to the person committing it as also to the society whose concern it is to ensure the safety of its member. Umāsvāmi has defined *himsā* (violence) as 'severance of vitalities out of passion" (*pramatta-yogāt prāṇavyaparopaṇaṁ himsā*). A person actuated by passion is *pramatta*. The activity of such a person is *pramatta-yoga*. Amṛtacandra Sūri has expressed similar views: He who injures the real nature of Jiva commits *himsā*. Any injury whatsoever to the material or conscious vitalities caused through passionate activity of mind, body or speech is undoubtedly *himsā*. *Himsā* is sure to result, if one acts carelssly under the influence of passions. Even where there is injury to the vitalities, there is no *himsa* if the man is not moved by any kind of passion and is carefully following Right Conduct."[16] Thus, it is only when a person puts an end to his own life due to his passionate activity that there is suicide.

I have already pointed out that in the observance of the vow of Sallekhanā, there is complete absence of passion and the conduct is directed to liberate the soul from the bondage of *karma*. While such individual advances himself spiritually

16. *Puruṣārtha-siddhyupāya*, Chap. VII.

by his austerities and meditation, his life elevates the community of devotees and other onlookers by purifying the mind of every individual and by creating an awareness in him or her of the inherent potentialities of the self. The conquest of all passions and full detachment from worldly desires and possessiveness visible in the conduct of the ascetic or the householder evoke our reverence for him. His quiet and joyful death makes us conscious of what is good for the individual and the community at large. His path of absolute renunciation and his march towards self-realization ennoble and enlighten the society at large. Such death is not suicide and cannot be categorised as such either according to law or morals.

The numerous instances of Sallekhanā collected from the inscriptions cover a period of two thousand years. Kings and queens, generals and soldiers, monks and nuns, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās* adopted the vow with consent or in the presence of their spiritual mentors. The relatives and dependants were aware of it. They fasted for days and spent their time in prayers before they quitted their bodies. The State and the society must have approved their practices, nay, must have held them in high esteem and veneration. If the high personages could adopt the vow, the State and the high officials must have been celebrating the occasion as sacred festivals. It is called *mṛtyumahotsava* (the great festival of death). It is worthy of mention that even during the British Rule, there were instances of ascetics adopting the vow and successfully fulfilling the same without any obstacle or obstruction.

Pausing here for a moment, one may glance through the pages of history of India extending over a period of over three thousand years. There have been innumerable instances of Sallekhanā, recorded and unrecorded. The country has been ruled over by Hindus, Muslims and Christians. The Kings and the Dynasties professed different religions and faiths. The Britishers had been in power for over 150 years. It is therefore most remarkable that none of the ruling powers either prohibited the practice of Sallekhanā or regarded it as a contravention

of the law then in force. This is a remarkable circumstance of great significance leading to an obvious inference that at no time was Sallekhanā regarded as "revolting to the moral sentiments of the society" or repugnant to the law in force. It was never equated with suicide in India.

The truth of the matter appears to be that Sallekhanā was unknown to the Europeans when the western languages started their development. They knew death by self-destruction which they called "suicide" and started using that word or its equivalent to cover even a death sanctioned by religion or brought about by fasting and meditation, motivated by self-realization or religious piety.

Codified law in India is in English and naturally the word 'suicide' came to be used in the process. Modern laws do not refer expressly or by implication to deaths by Sallekhanā or according to rules of any religion. Such deaths were common in ancient times when religion formed the basis of social structure and the kings had religious teachers as advisors. The constitutions of democratic countries guarantee freedom "to practise, propagate and preserve one's own religion." This right is subject in India only to interests of public order, morality and health. Every citizen has right to profess and practise his religion freely. It is one of the cardinal principles of Jaina religion that the noblest or the most spiritual way of meeting death is to resort to the vow of Sallekhanā when, due to circumstances already mentioned, a person is unable to live up to his religion and maintain the purity of his mind and heart. Even if the Indian Penal Code does not refer to this freedom, the provisions relating to the fundamental "right to freedom of religion" enshrined in Article 25 of the Constitution override the law in the Penal Code or other identical provisions in any other law. The implications of the constitutional guarantee are that acts sanctioned by religion and performed in accordance with the prescribed rites would not be punishable under any law of the land. Any law which curtails the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution cannot have

the sanctity of law and as the same would be unenforcible by any authority or in any court of law.

The practice of Sallekhanā cannot interfere with public order, health or morality. In fact, any person observing a monk or a nun practising the vow of Sallekhanā will feel spiritually elevated and ethically purified at the sight of one who has renounced all the worldly belongings and desires, and whose sole objective is to attain salvation by being liberated from the travails of the body. Such a sight would be edifying to the individual and a lesson on piety to the society.

It is impossible for each and everybody to adopt the vow of Sallekhanā because it requires the devotee to possess an unshakeable conviction that the soul and the body are separate, that the body is the result of accumulated karmas and that liberation from karmas is possible only by an austere life of supreme conduct founded on right faith and knowledge.

The vow is adopted by a person who has purified his mind and body by austerity, repentance and forgiveness; has freed himself from all passions and afflictions; and has ceased to have any attachment towards men and matters in the world. With ill-will or malice towards none, he stands detached from the world and becomes deeply engrossed in meditation on his self which is perfect knowledge and bliss. He meets death with joy, engrossed in the purest form of meditation. Such death is the death of liberation and not of bondage as is the case with suicide; it is spiritual or pious death, being sanctioned by religion, consistent with the highest code of spiritual knowledge and conduct.

SECTION VIII

SALLEKHANĀ BY ĀCĀRYA ŚĀNTISĀGAR

(*An Illustrious Illustration*)

What I have stated in the previous chapter that Sallekhanā is not Suicide can be explained and most satisfactorily illustrated from the life of Ācārya Śāntisāgar, the greatest Jaina saint of modern India who quitted his body on 18th Sept., 1955 in the morning at 6.50 A. M. at the holy place of Kunthalagiri. (Dist. Osmanabad) in the state of Mahārāṣṭra after observing the vow since 18th August 1955.

The name of Ācārya Śrī Śāntisāgar Muni Mahārāja is familiar to every Jaina family perhaps in the whole of India. He was born in 1873 at a village called Yaḷaguḍa near Bhoj in the Chikkoḍi Taluka of Belgaum District in the State of Karnataka. His original name was Sātagauḍā. Sow. Satyavati is the name of his mother while Śrī Bhīmanagauḍā Patil is the name of his father. Sātagauḍā was tall and well-built. His parents were devout Jainas who were pious and religious-minded observing the vows of the householders. His father had taken a vow to take only one meal a day about 16 years prior to his death. Sātagauḍa's formal education did not extend beyond the third standard of the Kannaḍa primary school but the religious atmosphere in the house was sufficiently strong to mould his character and outlook.

When Sātagauḍā was nine years old, his marriage was celebrated against his wishes with a girl who expired after six months. He never married thereafter and became a life-long celibate. By nature he was cool-headed, modest, compassionate and truthful. He never showed any genuine interest in agriculture and cloth-business which were the family-occupations. When he was 17 or 18 years old, he started reading Ātmānu-

śāsana and Samayasāra. He performed pilgrimages to the sacred places where the Tīrthaṅkaras had attained liberation, viz. Sammedashikhar, Pāvāpuri, Campāpuri etc. The desire to be initiated into asceticism became intense. His mother died in 1912 while his father had died a little earlier. Sātagauḍā visited holy places in the South including Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷa by about 1915. He was initiated as *kshullaka* in 1918 by Muni Devendrakīrti and as a naked monk in 1922 by the same Muni. He had already begun to observe the five *mahā-vratas* and the other vows which a Muni is required to follow. He developed an attitude towards all objects and problems which was fully consistent with scriptures. His discourses used to be full of commonsense and his illustration to clarify the principles of philosophy used to be from the familiar field of ordinary life. The devotees were so supremely happy with his character and spiritual ways of life that they conferred on him the title of *Cāritra Cakravarti* (Emperor of Character), though he was much disinclined towards such titles.

In 1944, Ācarya Śrī Śāntisāgar spent his four months of the rainy season at Kunthalagiri. He came to know that the manuscripts of Dhavalā, Jayadhavalā, and Mahādhavalā which contain fundamentals of Jaina philosophy, inscribed on palm leaves were being eaten away by white-ants. He suggested to the devotees that they should be inscribed on copper plates in Devanagari scripts and preserved from further destruction for the benefit of posterity. Accordingly an Association was established and most of the important scriptures were carved on copper-plates as also printed on thick paper.

The Ācāryajī carried the message of Jainism throughout the length and breadth of India and awakened thousands of Jainas and others spiritually inclined, to the path of purity and piety. He created a genuine thirst for religious study and understanding amongst the masses. Dr. Radhakrishnan who was then the Vice President of India described him as "the very embodiment of India's soul." There is no doubt that he shall ever be remembered as the true torch-bearer of Jainism in

this modern age of science and technology, who raised the status of Jaina Munis to unequalled heights of veneration and admiration for their life of austerity, purity of character, compassion towards all living beings and spiritual progress in the direction of self-realization.

There are numerous instances known to me of his long fasts, impressive exposition of the Jaina principles, miraculous events like the cobras and wild animals appearing and disappearing without causing the slightest disturbance, the new enlightenment which many men and women of all castes received at his feet and of the remarkable impression that he created on those who met him. It is not my purpose to write his biography but only to highlight the uniqueness of his mind and character as an undisputed monarch amongst the saints of the century. Many significant details of his life can be found in the Commemoration Volume ("*Smriti-Grantha*") published by Mr. Valchand Devachand Shah, the Secretary of Śrī Ācārya Śāntisāgar Jinavāni Jīrṇoddhāra Saṁsthā, Phaltan in Mahārāṣṭra.[1]

Coming to the relevant event of his life, Śrī Ācāryajī was camping at Bārāmati (Dist. Poona) in April 1955 when I had the last memorable privilege of having his ***darśana***. He was then suffering from defective eye-sight. Sometime in June, he started to go to Kunthalagiri. When the devotees pressed him to stay on due to his weak eye-sight, he told them mildly that they should allow him to have his own of life. He left Bārāmati and reached Kunthalagiri.

It is necessary here to refer to his mental condition before he adopted the vow. There used to be discussions on interesting religious topics. On 20.6.1955, he explained how man can have self-realization. He said : ' Man must ever be exerting towards betterment of his life. He must believe that his own self has all the powers of Bhagavān. One must practise self-control and study how he could acquire concen-

1. ***Smṛti Grantha on Śrī 108 Ācārya Cāritra Cakravartī Śāntisāgar***, **published by Shri Valchand Devachand Shah.**

tration. He must remember that the Self is different from the body; he must have full faith in that truth. He must deeply study the differences in the nature of the soul and the body.' On the successive days he went on expounding on devotion, meditation, repetition of the *ṇamokāra-mantra*, faith, prayer and their efficacy in self-realization. Man can perform *Japa* at any time of the day and night. He explained how delusion and infatuation pervert the soul and become responsible for the rise of passions. Non-attachment and self-control bring in real happiness. By contemplating daily on the virtues of the *Siddhas* and *Arihantas* and their nature with concentration one can get the real happiness of the Self. Amongst the senses, the tongue is the most powerful. Amongst the five vows, the most difficult one is celibacy. Amongst the *Guptis* that is, the control of mind, body and speech, the control of the mind is the most difficult one.

Speaking about himself in a mood of introspection, the Muniji said : " Even during my youth, I did penance as much as possible. During the *Aṣṭami* (8th day), *Caturdaśī* (14th day) of every fortnight, I used to sit in meditation from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. without moving from the place. I carried on my self-introspection in the hottest sun and heaviest of rains, I fasted at times for two days, eight days, ten days continuously. For Muni all the twenty-four hours are meant for self-introspection. I must now observe complete silence as I can do nothing on account of the growing weakness of my eye-sight."

On 5th July 1955, the Ācārya said after completing the morning Svādhyāya (reading of scriptures) : " Recently, the weakness of my eye-sight is growing. I had come here two years before. During my stay here then, there was some improvement in the eyesight. But this time, I do not feel so. Since I have to depend on others even at the time of walking, the transgressions of the vows have been increasing everyday. I have been therefore feeling that I should adopt the vow of Sallekhanā."

On 7th July, the Munijī observed fast and silence. The next day, the devotees suggested that he should give up his silence at least when the scriptures were being read. He told them that they should leave him free as he decided on the steps to be taken by him only after full deliberation.

In the meanwhile, two eminent doctors from Sholapur examined the eyes of the Muniji and came to the conclusion that he was developing cataract, that it might take 7 to 8 years to become mature for operation and that the eyes had become weak due to insufficiency of blood supply. So the Ācārya felt that he was not to get the eye-sight and that the only course left open to him was to prepare to quit the body by Sallekhanā. He accordingly took the vow of *Niyama Sallekhana* according to which food is to be avoided gradually as per decision. So on 10-8-1955, he even stopped taking the two morsels of food which he was taking and started taking only almond water. On 14-8-1955, he summoned all those who were there near him at 9 A. M. and announced his decision that *Niyama Sallekhanā* would last only for one week. On that day, he took only almond water. Then he decided not to take anything except water thereafter. On 26-8-1955, he asked for pardon from all those who had gathered there and told them that he had forgiven everybody. There was an atmosphere of awe and reverence all around. The people felt the spiritual heights attained by the Ācārya and that he was the very embodiment of perfection. From 28-8-1955, he even gave up water and became deeply engrossed in meditation and only attended the worship (*pūjā*) in the temple. Devotees from all places in the country started gathering at Kunthalagiri.

On 8-9-1955, it was the 25th day of complete fasting. The Ācārya gave a religious discourse for 22 minutes to the assembly and it was recorded. He said : "The eleven Aṅgas and fourteen old scriptures were an ocean of philosophy. There are no *Śrutakevalis* to expound the same. I am too insignificant to do it. Those who adopt the way of life preached by the Jina would attain happiness. Even he who repeats the

word *Om* would gain liberation. Everybody says that life and matter are different but very few have the faith in that principle. The characteristics of both are different. Our task is to strive for attainment of perfect happiness for our soul, but our karmas have worked havoc with our soul. The *mohanīya* karma has created such veil of infatuation that we have all forgotten the Reality. The *darśana-mohanīya* karma has affected the very fundamentals of our faith. So also about our conduct. What is it that we can do? We should try to destroy the destructive karmas in order to regain our Right Faith and Restraint. Since times immemorial, the *ātmā* has been suffering births and deaths. Kundakundācārya has given a clear exposition of all these points in his great books: Samayasāra, Niyamasāra, Pravacanasāra, Pañcāstikāya and the eight Pāhuḍas. But who has the Faith in these scriptures? If any person desires to elevate his own soul from the *saṁsāra*, he ought to develop his Faith and find out how he could realize happiness. We can destroy our *darśanāvaraṇīya* and *mohanīya* karmas by *ātma-cintana* - self-contemplation. Charity and worship bring in only merit (*puṇya*). Even pilgrimages bring in only merit. But to acquire *Kevala Jñāna* (Perfect Knowledge), we must cultivate the science of contemplation and practise it as long as it is possible every day. You cannot destroy your karmas without Right Faith and Right Knowledge. Cultivate control of your body, mind and speech. Try to attain the state of a *muni*. You can aspire for salvation by contemplation and destruction of all the karmas, that is the word of Jina. In sum, compassion is the basis of religion; Ahiṁsā and Truth form the foundation of Jainism. We speak of all this but few of us practise the principles in actual life. We must translate these principles into action. Therein lies our salvation."

The Ācārya maintained his peace and happy attitude of mind till the last. Most of the time he would be deeply engrossed in meditation. At times, he would repeat the *ṇamokāra mantra*. Those who sat near him heard him saying

Om now and then. The great Ācārya breathed his last on 18-9-1955 with the repetition of '*om namaḥ siddhebhyaḥ*' (obeisance to the perfect souls).

Thus ended the life of this great holy saint who showed the path of salvation to innumerable people by his own life of austerity, purity and self-restraint. While he elevated his soul by preaching and practising the doctrines of Jainism, he left his permanent imprints of spiritual greatness on the sands on time. He lived what he preached and what had been taught to the humanity by the revered Tīrthaṅkaras thousands of years ago.

Can the manner of his death be dubbed as suicide ? He was initiated into the first stage of asceticism in 1918. By 1955, he had ennobled his life by a devoted study, understanding, practice and preaching of the great doctrines of a universal religion which stands for a scientific approach to all metaphysical, theological and ethical problems. The religion of the conquerors, that is, of the Jinas shows the path of salvation according to which every *ātman* can attain the state of *paramātman* by liberating the *ātman* from the bondages of the karma by leading a life of purity, restraint and contemplation.

Now let us examine from the facts of his life and the circumstances under which he adopted the vow of Sallekhanā to show that it is not suicide. The true tests, as mentioned in the previous chapter are : (1) Intention; (2) Situation; (3) Means adopted; and (4) Consequences.

So far as the intention is concerned, it is clear from the brief history of his life that the Ācārya firmly believed in the teachings of the Jinas viz. that the soul and the body are different, that the body which had become old was not assisting him in living the life of a saint as the sense of dependence was increasing day by day and that the only way to stop further transgressions of the vows of an ascetic was to adopt the vow of Sallekhanā. In short, his express intention

was to save himself from lapses in the observance of religious rules and vows.

The situation under which he adopted the vow were explained by him before entering on Sallekhanā. Due to old age, his eye-sight had been failing day by day. His eyes had been examined by eminent eye-surgeons and they had pronounced that it was not possible to remedy the weakness in his vision as, due to old age, there was no supply of sufficient blood to the nerves. The vows of an ascetic require him to look ahead by six feet while walking with a view to avoid the possibility of treading on some small living beings, to observe the place of his sitting to avoid similar *hiṃsā* and exercise extreme care while taking in his food. For all these matters, he had become dependent. So he resorted to Sallekhanā owing to an incurable disease, extreme old age and consequent disability to fulfil the vows of an ascetic in accordance with religion.

The means adopted were most natural. He told his followers who were present there that he would gradually stop taking food and spend his time in meditation and *japa*. He asked for pardon from everybody and pardoned everybody on his part. He was living a life of complete detachment and spending his time in contemplation over his self. If he had not adopted the vow, he would have lived a life of transgressions of rules and vows of a saint. Adoption of the vow was the best solution as nourishing a body which was failing to serve the needs of a religious life would have only resulted in more transgressions. There was complete cessation of dependence on others. There was no *hiṁsā* of any kind to anybody. So the means adopted were consistent with religion.

The consequences of his quitting body were most ennobling to everybody. His last sermon about soul, karma, self-restraint, self-contemplation, *ahiṁsā* and truthfulness shows that he was alert and spiritually alive to the needs of the

soul. So far as the Ācārya was concerned, he breathed his last in peace and spiritual exultation. Those who were left behind were joyfully amazed at the spiritual heights which the Ācārya had scaled. They felt a new current of religious energy flowing into their souls. The day was observed as a day of religious festival singing songs of the saint's glory and the uniqueness of the religion which helped him to attain salvation. There was not the slightest of regret or remorse on the part of any of the devoteees.

During his lifetime, the Ācārya provided spiritual leadership to the community both by his practice and precepts. By his death, he proved how a saint who had controlled himself and subdued his sense could die " full of peace and without injury to any one," while his soul went to the kingdom of gods, with great lustre and full of brilliancy.

As Lord Mahāvīra said, there are two ways of death: death with one's own will and death against one's will. The latter kind of death is for ignorant men who are attached to pleasures and amusements, suffer the ills and diseases in life and die in dread of their future. But the virtuous and the learned, the monks who have controlled themselves and subdued their senses achieve, on their death either " freedom from all misery or godhood of great power." Even at death, they are " calm through patience and an undisturbed mind." This was the mode of death chosen by Ācārya Śrī Śāntisāgar and that is exactly how he died. Who can say that such pious and disciplined death is suicide?

APPENDIX I

Scriptures Quoted

1. *RATNA-KARAṆḌAKA ŚRĀVAKĀCARA*

उपसर्गे दुर्भिक्षे जरसि रुजायां च निःप्रतीकारे ।
धर्माय तनुविमोचनमाहुः सल्लेखनामार्याः ॥१२२॥

THE holy men say that Sallekhanā is giving up the body (by fasting) when there is an unavoidable calamity, severe draught, old age or incurable disease, in order to observe the discipline of religion.

अन्तक्रियाधिकरणं तपःफलं सकलदर्शिनः स्तुवते ।
तस्माद्यावद्विभवं समाधिमरणे प्रयतितव्यम् ॥१२३॥

ALL systems of faith praise that it is the fruit of penance to control one's mind and conduct at the time of death; therefore one should try to the best of one's ability to attain the glory of Sallekhanā.

स्नेहं वैरं सङ्गं परिग्रहं चापहाय शुद्धमनाः ।
स्वजनं परिजनमपि च क्षान्त्वा क्षमयेत्प्रियैर्वचनैः ॥१२४॥

(PRIOR to adoption of the vow), one should give up all love, hatred, companionship and attachment to possessions, with a pure mind, and obtain the forgiveness of one's own kinsmen and of others by sweet words while also forgiving them oneself.

आलोच्य सर्वमेनः कृतकारितमनुमतं च निर्व्याजम् ।
आरोपयेन्महाव्रतमामरणस्थायि निःशेषम् ॥१२५॥

ONE should adopt the great vow (of Sallekhanā) for the rest of one's life, after discussing with an open mind with one's Guru (preceptor) all acts of sins either committed by oneself or committed with one's consent or at one's instance.

शोकं भयमवसादं क्लेशं कालुष्यमरतिमपि हित्वा ।
सत्त्वोत्साहमुदीर्य च मनः प्रसाद्यं श्रुतैरमृतैः ॥१२६॥

AFTER banishing all grief, fear, anguish, attachment, wickedness and hatred, one should keep one's mind pleased with the nectar of scriptures with all energy and enthusiasm.

आहारं परिहाप्य क्रमशः स्निग्ध विवर्धयेत्पानम् ।
स्निग्धं च हापयित्वा खरपानं पूरयेत्क्रमशः ॥१२७॥

खरपानहापनामपि कृत्वा कृत्वोपवासमपि शक्त्या ।
पञ्चनमस्कारमनास्तनुं त्यजेत्सर्वयत्नेन ॥१२८॥

ONE should give up gradually all solid foods, increase the taking of liquids like milk, then give up even liquids gradually and take warm water.

THEREAFTER, one should give up warm water also, observe fast to the best of one's ability with determination and depart from the body repeating the ṇamokār-mantra continuously till the last.

जीवित-मरणाशंसे भय-मित्रस्मृति-निदाननामानः ।
सल्लेखनातिचाराः पञ्च जिनेन्द्रैः समादिष्टाः ॥१२९॥

DURING the observance of the vow, one should not commit any of the transgressions : entenrtaining a desire to live, wishing for speedy death, exhibiting fear, or desire to meet friends or remember them or expecting to be born with all comforts and pleasure in the next life.

*

2. *REALITY*, **Canto VII, Sutra 22**

मारणान्तिकीं सल्लेखनां जोषिता ।

THE vow of Sallekhanā should be adopted with pleasure when death is near at hand.

*

3. *SĀGĀRA–DHARMĀMṚTA*, **Canto VIII, Verse 5**

न धर्मसाधनमिति स्थास्नु नश्यं वपुर्बुधैः ।
न च केनापि नो रक्ष्यमिति शोच्यं विनश्वरम् ॥

EVEN though the wise men say that the body is perishable, yet, it is an instrument for the realisation of the Dharma consisting of the three jewels (Ratna-traya); none can save the body from death nor should one consider it imperishable.

*

4. *MŪLĀCĀRA*, **Canto II, Verse 31**

तिविहं भणंति मरणं बालाणं बालपंडियाणं च ।
तइयं पंडियमरणं जं केवलिणो अणुमरंति ॥

[त्रिविधं भणन्ति मरणं बालानां बालपण्डितानां च ।
तृतीयं पंडितमरणं यत्केवलिनोऽनुम्रियन्ते ॥]

THE Omniscient have opined that death is of three kinds: bāla-maraṇa, bāla-paṇḍita-maraṇa and paṇḍita-maraṇa.

*

5. *PURUṢĀRTHA-SIDDHYUPAYA*, **Vol. IV**

यो हि कषायाविष्टः कुम्भकजलधूमकेतुविषशस्त्रैः ।
व्यपरोपयति प्राणान् तस्य स्यात्स आत्मवधः ॥

HE who puts an end to his life by suffocating himself in water or by fire, poison or weapons, being actuated by passions, is certainly guilty of suicide.

*

6. *SĀGĀRA-DHARMĀMṚTA*, **Canto VIII, Verse 8**

न चात्मघातोऽस्ति वृषक्षतौ वपुरुपेक्षितुः ।
कषायावेशतः प्राणान् विषाद्यैर्हिंसतः स हि ॥

HE who becomes indifferent to his own body owing to his disability to keep up his vow will not be committing suicide; but who puts an end to his life, when he is in the grip of passion like anger etc., by means of poison and other things will be guilty of suicide.

APPENDIX II

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